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Rural Sociology

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Elements *of* Rural Sociology

BY

Newell LeRoy Sims

PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY
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To
The Memory of My Father
who was in his day
A Master Farmer

PREFACE

THIS text originally was written not only for students with a country background but also for those bred in urban areas who in increasing numbers are finding some acquaintance with rural sociology desirable. That twofold purpose is adhered to in this edition.

Recent years have brought many changes in the rural community. Revolutionary forces have been playing upon it. In various ways its institutions and behavior patterns have undergone alteration and readjustment. This fact must be taken into account in any analysis of its life. I have therefore revised, reorganized, and largely rewritten the work, making use of new points of view, new graphic material, and the latest available data. The emphasis, as hitherto, is upon the development of community life, in the belief that the essential sociological problems of rural society and their solution revolve about it.

The book has taken its present form in response to numerous suggestions from many teachers who have kindly given me the benefit of their experience in using the earlier editions. Apart from a general rearrangement of chapters, the addition of a new one and a recasting of subject matter, new bibliographies bring the literature down to date, and topics for discussion have been added.

Grateful acknowledgment is here made to the many authors from whose works I have freely excerpted material. Special thanks is offered all who gave helpful hints for revising.

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NEWELL LEROY SIMS

Oberlin, Ohio
February, 1940

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Part I

INTRODUCTION



1. A Farmers' Village of the New England Colonial Type

RURAL SOCIETY AND SOCIOLOGY

Our Dual Civilization

THE fact does not escape even the most casual observer that our civilization has two major aspects, a rural and an urban. The two complement each other. At the same time, they fall apart and oppose at so many points that each becomes a world by itself. The student of society must therefore give them separate consideration. Inevitably and unfortunately, he is pretty apt to approach the study of either world with a set of stereotypes acquired in but one. He will see thru either the eyes of a ruralist or those of an urbanite. In neither case will he see the social order sane and whole, altho it behooves him to understand how the other lives and thinks, and what his problems are. If it be his privilege to acquire such understanding, his mind set will naturally undergo modification, his outlook become less provincial, and his citizenship more vital.

This diversity of outlook upon society suggests two phases of sociology. That fact was vividly borne home to the writer in an experience of many years ago. It was his lot, a countryman born and bred, to travel across a good portion of the continent in company with one who was city born and bred. The person, tho highly cultured, had scarcely ever before set foot beyond the confines of the urban district whence we departed. As we left the suburbs and factories behind and came into the midst of corn and wheat fields, meadows, and woods, my companion remarked, "I didn't know there was so much vacant space in the United States." Again and again as the great open country rolled before us in all its varied phases, there came many similar remarks about "the wide uninhabited spaces," "what could be done with so much land," and

"who could bear to live so far away from anywhere." I became impressed with the fact that my companion's mental picture of the United States was one of city streets and stores, factories and stockyards, crowded tenements and misery, fine boulevards and palatial dwellings, suburbs with parks and slums with playgrounds, crowds of people shopping, walking, parading, riding, thronging theaters and churches, going and coming amid din and noise by day and by night. This picture, I discovered, was, to be sure, not of one continuous city. There were many cities, but they were not far apart and the space between was made up of gardens whence came things to eat. The railways and highways connected these cities and thus with brief intervals led from place to place. In the picture there was almost no "vacant space" without houses. There seemed to be scarcely any allowance for fields of grain, tasseled corn, whited cotton, cattle on a thousand hills, or orchards ripe with fruit. The source of food seemed to be gardens clinging to the city outskirts. The people were thought of as virtually all dwelling in some town or city. There was absolutely no appreciation of the fact that there dwelt in that "vacant space" thirty millions of the American nation carrying on its most important and largest single industry. It was not understood that the toil of these millions made possible the cities, fed them, furnished them with raw materials to manufacture, and supplied them with much labor and new life. There was no knowledge that these millions lived and labored under conditions altogether different from those with which my companion was familiar. In brief, the picture represented our country as a city or a series of cities with green fringes of relatively little importance round about.

In contrast with this was my own picture of America. It was of farmsteads, rich acres, deep woods, templed hills, and schoolhouses at the crossroads; plowed fields, growing crops and harvests, grazing sheep and cattle, and broad roads leading by numberless farm homes. It was a picture full of men and teams plowing corn and making hay, of women busy at housework, of animals squealing or lowing for their food, of people going now and then to villages for mail or to market, gathering occasionally for a picnic, and

Everywhere was the landscape with other landscapes around about on every hand. And out on the remote borders of this world were the cities, Buffalo, Chicago, Atlanta, Boston, Cincinnati, New York, New Orleans, Omaha, San Francisco. To these, in my picture, flowed the produce shipped from thousands of villages, and to these remote places one might sometime make a visit. These cities were at most but incidents in the social order as I saw it, noisy, grimy, vicious places. Their manner of life seemed unnatural, abnormal, undesirable; and why anyone who could escape from it did not, was quite past understanding. The idle and the rich, the degenerate and the frivolous, the sweated and the miserable, mingled in futile striving, seemed indeed to demonstrate that man had made the city but God the country.

The contrasts presented in these two pictures may seem a bit unusual and extreme, and yet I am persuaded they do not seriously misrepresent two rather common and important viewpoints. Those who, looking with urban minds, see the city as the center and the farms of the nation the circumference of society, and those who, seeing as countrymen, behold the picture reversed, are reacting only as their respective experiences direct them. Part of the task of sociology is to widen this experience so that the social order may be comprehended in its wholeness with the urban and rural phases properly evaluated and related. An urban and a rural sociology are needed to correct partial viewpoints. No student can count his knowledge of society sufficient for the demands of American citizenship unless it includes rural sociology. Those who hail from rural districts and expect to return thither need this discipline along with their general sociology. And those who are of the city and look to urban careers need the study of country life in addition to that of urban conditions and problems. Until of late, as we shall proceed to show, there has been only an urban sociology, but now the rural is being developed to render its full mead of service in the understanding of human association. The emergence of the latter is tied up with the evolution of society. Certain phases of this may well be sketched to give background for our study.

Social Evolution and Sociology

Cities are old. They played an important rôle in the civilizations of antiquity. In Assyria, Egypt, Greece, and Rome they became powerful influences, but in other large areas of the old world their significance was not so great. Nowhere in antiquity did they attain relative greatness in size. Where they dominated the civilizations of which they were a part, it was due to a military class that centered its régime in them, rather than to the concentration of the sources of wealth and vast masses of people. When, however, industrial and commercial civilization in contrast to political or military began to rise, the city rose with it to a new place in the social order.

At the close of the Middle Ages, this change was taking place. Trade and manufacture were supplanting conquest and plunder among European peoples, and this new mode of activity meant the creation of cities. From the feudal manors to the towns came villeins to labor for wages, from the towns trade routes reached out to other towns to bring goods until by the gravitation of peoples and wealth to them these centers began to gravitate to the center of the social order. Thus we see the cities becoming dominant over the state and the urban-industrial civilization becoming well established by the Fifteenth Century. Subsequently, as mechanisms were invented and manufacturing processes revolutionized urban development, the cities attained to new and undreamed of power. Growing as if by magic under the impetus of factories and workshops, and massing together great hordes of human beings, the cities of the Nineteenth Century began to face social, economic, political, and moral problems both new and unprecedented. There were squalor and poverty, disease, degeneracy and crime on a scale and to a degree never before experienced by civilized man. The laws, agencies, and institutions that had been devised to deal with these problems under other conditions were found inadequate. Wealth was accumulating as never before, but at the terrible cost of human decay and degradation. Laborers, ground down by the iron law of wages, found themselves in a new villenage infinitely

worse than that of the feudal system. For bad as that system was, it did provide a living, whereas the wage system assured nothing. The bitter cry of misery arose only to be drowned by the whirl of machines and the traffic of thronged city streets. In the midst of it all, however, new humanitarian forces were striving to be born and receive recognition. Workingmen, for instance, were restless and aspiring to a new freedom thru organization. New theories of the cause of poverty and new agencies of relief were likewise in the making. Moreover, new adventures in experimental social organization, such as that of Robert Owen, were under way. Out of this awakening of thought and effort along many lines came a new science, called sociology. Born partially of endeavors to improve the lot of man and the desire for systematic self-direction in place of the social drift, both practical and theoretical sociology came into being. It was the child of an urban-industrial civilization. Both Auguste Comte, the grandfather of the science, and Herbert Spencer, its father, sought the laws of human association amid the chaos and complexity of existing conditions. Likewise, numerous reformers endeavored to formulate programs in harmony with such principles as could be discovered or suggested.

Naturally enough, having been produced partially by urban conditions, practical sociology was first concerned with city problems. In America, where it has had its chief development and greatest vogue, its interests remained urban until a third of a century ago. Poverty and relief, population and immigration, class conflict, crowd behavior, vice, housing conditions, social stratification, institutions, and the organization of metropolitan areas were the chief interests of the science. The existence of rural society was recognized, but that was about all. As yet there was no body of knowledge pertaining to it and no concern about it.

The Rise of Rural Society

The same forces that brought about the growth and ascendancy of the city were everywhere affecting rural society. In the United States they were long delayed by exceptional conditions. But it was

inevitable that sooner or later they would be felt. Their rise and influence may be indicated by tracing the stages of rural development.

Thirty years ago Professor J. B. Ross described three stages in the transformation of the Middle West.¹ Later, Dr. Warren H. Wilson extended the idea to the development of the whole country in a work entitled, *The Evolution of the Rural Community*.

The first stage was the pioneer period, dating from the earliest settlements to about 1800 in the East, to 1835 and later in various sections of the Middle West, and to the nineties in the Far West and Southwest. During this period, particularly in the great Mississippi Valley, every important movement was directed toward the land. Farms were being carved out of a vast public domain. In wilderness and on prairie rural society was aborning. Except at the later end of the period on the Far Western frontiers, farming was a self-sufficient occupation. It was an age of homespun, handicraft, and hoe-farming.

The second stage, called the "Land Farming Period," succeeded the pioneer era and generally ran its course by about 1890. This has also been called the "classical period" of rural society, for well-established homes, schools, and churches prevailed. The crudities and hardships of the pioneer economy had given place to comfortable living. It was the heyday of country life. Families were large, institutions thriving, a virgin soil was producing bountifully, and a sturdy and well-satisfied people gave a wholesome neighborhood life. Cities also were flourishing and beginning to attract young countrymen. There was a marked urban drift in the East, but in the Middle West only an occasional person deserted the farm. What little migration there was could be described as a movement of individuals rather than of families.

However, the forces of change were at work preparing a new and less favorable era. There had been remarkable developments in means of transportation. Steamships were plowing the seas and railways were girdling the country. This transportation revolu-

¹ J. B. Ross, "The Agrarian Revolution in the Middle West," *North American Review*, September, 1909.

tion opened up world markets for farm products. At the same time the western frontier was vanishing, and urban industries were expanding and calling for labor. Village workshops were gravitating to the great centers. The full force of the industrial revolution was being felt. Simultaneously, machinery was being introduced into agriculture. The mower, the reaper and binder, the sulky plow, the grain drill, and the power-driven thresher led the way for numerous devices to follow. The agricultural process was passing from hoe-farming to machine-farming. An agrarian revolution was taking place. The productive capacity of the farmer was being multiplied many fold and the need of labor curtailed. Thus rural society moved to a third stage.

The third stage, known as the "Exploiter Period," began about 1890 in the Middle West and spread over the country until 1920. It was characterized by a land boom and speculation. With the disappearance of free land, values doubled, trebled, quadrupled, as townsmen and farmers bought and sold, not primarily for agricultural purposes, but for profit. Commercial farming supplanted self-sufficient agriculture. Tenancy grew apace as the cost of land soared. Absentee landlordism became common. A great exodus from the country to the city set in. This exodus has continued to rise like a swelling tide for a generation. *Pari passu* there came a great unsettlement almost everywhere among farmers. It was marked by the shifting from high to low priced land and by the moving to and fro of tenants. Schools and churches suffered loss and declined. In new sections abandoned farms appeared. The whole period was one of rural social decay.

It was in this period that rural sociology arose. As general sociology appeared when city life brought forth a host of problems, so rural sociology was born when country life became seriously maladjusted. It was a peculiar set of agrarian problems that led to it—problems that were especially American. Hence rural sociology, as such, is an American creation.

If these problems are clearly grasped it will be seen why a new sociology appeared. Change and unrest have never been absent from American country life. Again and again, antedating the ex-

plighter period, agrarian problems arose. For a generation preceding the Civil War there was agitation and political conflict over access to the public lands. Following the Civil War, came the problems of agricultural depression, railway rates, credit, money, prices, farm mortgages, giving rise to the Granger movement. Many solutions were sought. Organizations, such as the Grange and Farmers' Alliance, kept the cause of the farmer before the nation. But these problems did not lead directly to any science of rural sociology. The reason was that they were chiefly economic. Important as they were, their sociologic consequences did not appear to be generally destructive of the rural social order.

In the late eighties and in the nineties, rural problems became something more than economic. They began to involve the family life, institutions, quality of population, and the community. So long as bad economic conditions did not drive people off the land, institutional or community life was not seriously disturbed. No one was alarmed over the situation. But when farmers moved to town and left abandoned farms or rented them, when schools and churches closed their doors, and when the country came to be looked upon by those who remained in it as an undesirable dwelling place, then the situation became critical in a most fundamental way. It presented a social problem of the first magnitude, and men began to recognize the fact that something should be done.

In New England and New York a few magazine writers and public-minded men were the first to direct attention to these conditions. They pointed to deserted farms, decadent hill towns, agricultural decline, folk depletion, and social degeneration. They found the chief cause of these in social drainage to the cities and to the West. They talked of "keeping the boys on the farm," and urged a "back to the farm" movement. In the Middle West occasionally an editor of a farm journal or a Grange leader became aware of the social drift. Noticeable among those who intelligently comprehended what was happening in the country and expressed themselves about it, were Liberty Hyde Bailey, Dean of the New York College of Agriculture, and Kenyon L. Butterfield of Mich-

igan. To these two men, master and disciple as it were, was due much of the pioneer work in creating a general interest in the sociology of country life and in projecting the science itself. It was Dean Bailey who first formulated a clear statement of the problem of rural society in other than essentially economic terms. He emphasized the distinctively human and social when he declared the problem to be that of "developing and maintaining on our farms a civilization in full harmony with the best American ideals."

Until the second decade of the present century, there was not much known about rural society. A considerable periodical literature, a few monographs and doctors' dissertations on various phases of rural life had appeared. But this fragmentary and unorganized material had not been integrated into a body of knowledge that could be called a science. A course in the subject had been offered at the University of Michigan and perhaps in a few other schools of higher learning, but neither the agricultural and private colleges nor the universities had taken serious cognizance of the field.

President Theodore Roosevelt's Commission on Country Life was the agency that first stimulated general interest in the subject. Doubtless prompted by his own experience and the current discussions of the problems of the farmer in the press, at farmers' institutes and in other circles, Roosevelt was led to appoint a committee to study the problem. This was done in 1907. It was viewed as part of the conservation movement which the President was championing. In the introduction to the official report of this committee, which was published in 1911, the purpose of the commission was fully set forth: "The commission was appointed because the time has come when it is vital to the welfare of the country seriously to consider the problems of farm life. . . . The problems of farm life have received very little consideration and the result has been bad for those who dwell in the open country, and therefore bad for the whole nation."²

The commission was significantly headed by Dean Bailey, with whom were associated representative men from various sections of the country. They carried on investigations and held hearings.

² *Report of the Commission on Country Life*, pp. 9-10.

The report they finally submitted to the President gave great impetus to the development of rural sociology. In fact, it is not far wrong to say that this report virtually heralded its advent.

That report discovered and emphasized eight major deficiencies in the life of the countryside. Specifically, these were:

1. Soil depletion brought about by careless farming.
2. An inadequate supply of skilled farm labor.
3. Land speculation.
4. Poor highways, handicapping the marketing process and the education of country children.
5. Marketing conditions that made the farmer a victim of rail-ways and middlemen.
6. Deficiencies in health protection of rural families.
7. Overwork of farm women, causing many to abandon the country for town and city.
8. Rural school inadequacy.

Obviously these points covered many phases besides the distinctively human side. Nevertheless, they all have their bearing on the life of the farmer.

Following the publication of this report, a rapid development took place. Many agencies became interested. Church missionary societies, college departments, and individuals began making field surveys in various localities to discover the facts. Courses were introduced into college and university curricula. Methods of investigation adapted to the rural field have been worked out and are being applied to the gathering of information. Research has been fostered by several agencies. In 1917 a rural section of the American Sociological Society was formed to stimulate research. In 1919 the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life was set up in the United States Department of Agriculture for the same purpose. This bureau in coöperation with the State Colleges of Agriculture and other governmental agencies has greatly advanced knowledge of country life. Later the Institute of Social and Religious Research, a private agency now defunct, made some useful surveys. The Purnell Act of Congress, in 1925, authorizing the Agricultural Experiment Stations to use funds for economic and

social research, further enlarged the possibilities for the exploration of rural society. Research departments sprang up in many of the state colleges to utilize these funds. Under the New Deal rural sociological research was given further impetus when in 1933 The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was created with a Rural Research Unit. This unit was presently coördinated with the Purnell workers in the several Agricultural Experiment Stations. The result is that rural sociological analysis is better financed and is being more vigorously pushed than is any other branch of sociology.

As data have accumulated, they have been synthesized into a science. The literature of the subject has grown rapidly. Since the first college text, by John M. Gillette in 1913, several others have been published, marking the steady progress of the science. Altho still young and immature, it has won wide recognition and continues to grow apace. All told, more than eight hundred teachers, researchers, and extension workers are now engaged in promoting it. The latest steps in its development include the founding in 1935 of a quarterly journal, *Rural Sociology*, and the organization in 1937 of an independent society known as the Rural Sociological Society of America.

The Field of Rural Sociology

The field of rural sociology is the study of association among people living by or immediately dependent upon agriculture. Open country and village grouping and group behavior as distinguished from larger urban aggregates and their behavior, are its concern. Society, whether rural or urban, has common elements that must always be considered. These are the people and their culture. The latter is commonly subdivided into the material and non-material. The non-material may again be divided into several types. For our purposes two may be designated. The first we shall call the *Structural*, meaning thereby organization by position or location which gives forms of settlement and community types. The second we shall refer to as *Institutional*, signifying organization resulting

from functional relations, or the behavior patterns that arise from the pursuit of like interests. Thus this work will treat of the *Structural*, the *Vital*, the *Material*, the *Institutional*, and the *Processual* phases of rural society.

The fact that these phases vary both quantitatively and qualitatively and have different modes of combination makes the differences between societies. Wherefore, there are differences between rural and urban society, and hence a rural as distinguished from an urban sociology.

Rural sociology cannot, of course, ignore these common elements, as they relate to society in general, including urban society. In fact, at its present stage of immaturity, overmuch attention is given to the contrasting features of urban and rural life. Properly speaking, this is comparative sociology rather than distinctively rural sociology. Be it so, it is the best that can be offered under present circumstances. Inasmuch as the emphasis tends to be comparative, it may be well at this point to sketch some of the outstanding differences between urban and rural society. To do this will anticipate to some degree what will appear at many angles in subsequent chapters of this book, but it will also facilitate the student's understanding of what the rural field includes. Let it be noted that in pointing out the differences, we shall have in mind distinctly American conditions.

1. There are differences in the *composition* of urban and rural groups. Numerically the city presents masses in congested areas, the country small numbers in relative isolation. The age and sex distribution is not the same. Nor are the two ethnically alike. The city is heterogeneous in its racial elements, while the country is normally fairly homogeneous. In mental quality and physical stamina other divergences appear. Nor do men associate in the same manner. Urban contacts differ from rural both in quantity and quality. In the one case they are frequent, transient, and formal; in the other, relatively seldom, but full, intimate, and regularly recurring. Rural association is familial, communal, primary, and comparatively permanent, but urban is individual, secondary, and more largely functional.

2. In *cultural heritage* the city has almost infinite variety and richness, whereas the country has more sameness and poverty. There are hundreds of urban occupations, techniques, and pursuits of a widely divergent nature, against a score or so closely related ones in the average rural community. There are many urban codes of behavior, whereas over wide areas the country tends to support but a single one.

3. The *wealth* of the city is relatively unlimited compared with that of rural areas. The bulk of it is intangible and fluid, in contrast to the tangible and fixed form wealth assumes in the country. Distribution in the city runs to extremes and shows glaring disparity, but in the country it strikes a low average and tends to equality.

4. Urban *structure* is multiple and complex, but the rural is more limited and simple. The latter is more territorially determined, while the former is based largely on interests. The activities of urban groups are highly organized, but those of rural are often informal. The city dweller cannot escape conformity to structure; the country dweller hardly needs to give heed to it at all.

From these differences and the combinations to which they give rise, it must be clear that urban and rural society are unlike, and their sociologies, perforce, more or less distinct.

The Particular Subject Matter of Rural Sociology

The subject matter of rural sociology is usually thought of as the problem or the several problems arising from living in the country. A social problem implies maladjustment for which remedies are desirable. Back of all there are assumed norms of human life and association by comparison with which shortcomings are discovered and hence the existence of problems realized. From this viewpoint the subject matter of sociology may be said to be social adequacy. This, in fact, has been the subject matter of most of our so-called rural sociology.

There are two ways of viewing the subject. One we may call the

particularistic; the other, the pluralistic method. The first tries to comprehend everything under one problem. So we hear of "the rural problem." In the beginning of the country life movement, men described conditions in this way. Thus Dean Bailey said, "It is the problem of developing and maintaining on our farms a civilization in harmony with the best American ideals"; and Kenyon L. Butterfield, expressing the same idea in other language, said, "The farm problem in its most fundamental aspects is the problem of maintaining a standard people upon our farms."

Others have been more concerned about the causes of maladjustment and thus have defined the problem in different terms. Sir Horace Plunkett, an Irish statesman and leader, in 1910 wrote a book entitled *Rural Life Problems in the United States*, asserting that the weak spot was in the business methods on our farms. There is need, said he, of "better farming, better business, better living," but if we are to have that which is the real desideratum, "better living," the approach must be thru "better business." This he held could be secured only by "coöperation." Thus the rural problem and its solution revolved about the question of developing coöperative habits and agencies.

Dr. C. J. Galpin, leaving the economic aspects out of account on the assumption that the agricultural scientist and economist will deal with them, stated the problem: "How shall the rural population liberate itself from the restrictions and repressions upon its manner of life and labor . . . so as greatly to extend its acquaintance with persons and increase its contacts with the human mind?"³ Everything turned, in his judgment, upon increasing the number, the variety, and the quality of contacts for the isolated countryfolks. He would have mental touch with other than farmers for the man, the woman, the youth, the child, to broaden and enrich narrow experience; multiplication of contacts between farmers themselves and with non-farmers; deepening of the quality of contacts, so that the minds of farmers may become dynamic and filled with the culture of the wider world.⁴ So, restricted freedom

³ C. J. Galpin, *Rural Life*, p. 57.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

of contact causes the problem, and extending contacts furnishes the solution.

Their efforts all tended to oversimplify. Thus there is a fallacy in saying the rural problem is to keep a standard population on the soil. Even tho the view avoids the "back to the land" notion, it remains too circumscribed. Likewise, lack of coöperation does not comprehend all the difficulties. However much thoroughgoing coöperation might accomplish, there are conditions it would scarcely touch. The same strictures apply to isolation and multiplication of contacts. Contacts are being increased today with good and bad results, but, to say the least, they do not promise to solve the difficulties of country life.

In place of particularistic statements, a unitary approach is needed. We call that unitary which tries to summarize the whole situation without ignoring a multiplicity of causes and phases. So conceived, the rural problem arises from social instability and its solution lies in a process of stabilization. The population is not stable. It is unsettled, shifting much from community to community within the rural area, and even more from that area to urban centers. City drift and rural migration are, however, but symptoms of deeper disorders. There can be no stabilization of the population unless these are corrected. Another phase of instability is institutional. Schools fall short of sufficient numbers, and are closed up or must be reorganized where population is impermanent. Churches disintegrate and must shut their doors. The family is unsettled by virtue of the departure of the children. Community organization rises and falls because of uncertain constituencies and leadership.

The cultural status of the average neighborhood is likewise a fluctuating factor where citizenship is not permanent. Farm owners give place to tenants. With the men having no fixed stake in the land and the women having their eyes on some urban haven of retirement, the agricultural technique, the neighborly spirit, the urge to improve the community are sure to sag.

Underneath all is economic instability. Land values are unsettled. Traded in by men who have no interest in country life, farms

have fluctuated in price until the whole rural economy has been upset. High values in one section and low ones in another have fostered extensive migrations. Extreme values have promoted the rapid growth of tenantry. Over wide areas land has become sub-marginal thru erosion and exhaustion, and the people living upon it face starvation or migration. With this is associated instability in the price of farm products. Assured markets with fair returns have been wanting. In consequence there has been no certainty of a reasonable income or an adequate standard of living. Stabilization, therefore, seems to comprehend much of the problem of rural society. Economic stabilization, merely because that happens to be basic, is not the only key to the solution of the difficulties. Equally essential is a demographic, communal, cultural, institutional, and organizational stabilization, since all hang together in reciprocal relation.

The pluralistic method of analysis sees many problems as phases of a whole where the particularistic sees but one. As a recent writer has put it, "The rural problem is not one problem but many problems combined and interwoven to such a degree that a single definition is impossible and for which a single solution cannot be found."⁵ City drift and rural decline, rising tenantry and poverty, church decadence, school and educational inefficiency, recreational inadequacy, isolation, insanitary living and poor health protection, individualism and non-coöperation, and insufficient organization are among the chief problems that concern the rural sociologist.

Those who persist in the particularistic analysis have not yet emancipated themselves from the birth-process of this field of study. That process was naturally synthetic. From the endeavors of all sorts of agencies seeking to improve rural conditions the data have been assembled and wrought into a loose-knit body of knowledge. Education, religion, agricultural economics, farm management, domestic science, hygiene, aided by the good roads movement, the conservation program, and numerous other reform efforts contributed material.⁶ The result was a conglomerate of many arts,

⁵ C. C. Taylor, *Rural Sociology*.

⁶ H. B. Hawthorn, *The Sociology of Rural Life*, p. 6.

sciences, and reform programs. It is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise under the circumstances. A variety of unsatisfactory conditions came to light and began to clamor for interpretation and solution. Pure sociology was not sufficiently mature and experienced to furnish the needed aid. Its method was not adapted to the new field. The data of the rural order were different, and, naturally, pragmatic interests dictated that they be handled in a manner different from the customary procedure. So we have the study of a lot of problems instead of a consistent sociological treatment.

What has just been said is not by way of condemnation, for it is about the best that could be done or can still be done, until our knowledge is more complete than it is. A pure sociology of country life is highly desirable, but he who undertakes to produce it must be fully aware that only a very tentative work is as yet possible.

Some Requirements for a Pure Science of Rural Sociology

As with sociology in general, *the first requirement* is a clear concept of what society is, and of how sociology is to be delimited. Sociologists do not always agree on these points, but most of them understand society to mean the phenomenon of human grouping and collective behavior, and sociology to be the study of that grouping as such.

In addition to a clear concept of sociology, *a second requirement* for a pure science is a unitary approach to the study of group behavior. If, moreover, a comprehensive sociology is to follow, this viewpoint also must be comprehensive.

So far there has been but one attempt to produce a rural sociology from a unitary standpoint. Under the title, *The Sociology of Rural Life*, Professor H. B. Hawthorn has made this attempt. He writes of rural socialization, which he construes as "the process by which a country civilization of culture and high living standards is built."⁷ Unitary approaches of this sort are correct and the out-

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

come is true sociology. One may cavil over the validity of particular principles or processes employed, but not over the method. What constitutes a valid viewpoint depends upon how comprehensive we wish our sociology to be.

It would seem that rural sociology must eventually comprehend the total behavior of rural locality and interest groups. This will involve something more than the process of socialization, even tho that be made to include ever so much. The ensuing chapters of this work will attempt merely to outline the subject from this more comprehensive viewpoint. Little more can be done than to point the way along which a pure sociology of country life can be developed. As yet the data out of which to create it are not available.

Wherefore, a *third requisite* for a rural sociology is more scientific knowledge. This is being gathered, but the task of accumulating it is peculiarly slow and difficult. Compact urban groups with many organizations keeping records lend themselves to study with comparative ease. But not so country life; it can be made to give up sufficient facts from its far-flung and varied areas only as organized agencies spend much money and effort in surveys. Fortunately, many agencies are now engaged at the task. Eventually we may hope for enough facts to make possible a real science of rural sociology:

Ruralist versus Rurbanist

We began this chapter by describing contrasting impressions of the social order. We may conclude it by orientating sociology with respect to two opposing attitudes.

The ruralists represent one attitude. They would like to see the farmer self-sufficient and independent of the urban world. They would have him utilize the rural resources at hand and maintain a civilization as distinct as possible from the city's. This attitude is somewhat prevalent among farmers themselves. Evidence of it appears in both conscious and unconscious expressions. There are certain fears lest the urban corrupt rural ways and undermine moral standards. Antipathies toward urban people and traditions are manifest. Downright antagonism to city interests and institutions

is shown. Boorish customs and manners are sometimes glorified. Such movements as the Ku Klux Klan and the anti-evolution campaign reveal not a little of this ruralism rampant. Some of this amounts to protective coloration with a rural inferiority complex underneath.

Not only the rank and file, but sometimes leaders also have this attitude. Not a few in the farm organization movement have it. Likewise some writers, teachers, and sociologists entertain this viewpoint.

The rurbanists think the country and the city must coöperate, that they are mutually dependent, and that everything must be done to harmonize them. They hold that no good can come to either from isolation. The city needs food and raw material which the country alone can supply, and the country needs made things, the comforts and luxuries which are furnished by the city.

There can be no doubt that conditions are playing into the hands of the rurbanists and destroying the foundations of ruralism. The day was when the American farmer was independent. As one wrote, "At this time my farm gave me and my whole family a good living on the produce of it and left me one year with another hundred and fifty silver dollars, for I never spent more than ten dollars a year which was for salt, nails, and the like. Nothing to eat, drink, or wear was bought, as my farm provided all."⁸ No longer than a half century ago a poet could with some truth say:

Let sailors sing of ocean deep,
Let soldiers praise their armor,
But in my heart this toast I'll keep,
The Independent Farmer.

But today all that independence is gone. Economically the farmer has become quite as dependent upon the city as the city is upon him. Nor is he culturally self-sufficient any more. The arts and techniques over which he once had almost exclusive command are gone. Political power has passed from his hands. The process

⁸ Quoted from "The American Museum in 1787," by L. MacGarr, *The Rural Community*, p. 30.

of change has brought social differentiation, specialization, and interdependence. The situation must be accepted, and country and city alike must recognize that each is a part of the whole and must coördinate their activities for the common good.

Rural sociology cannot ignore the interactions of urban and rural culture. Standards are inevitably set by the more dynamic and effective social groups. This has made the urban the pace-making group of the Great Society. Consciously and unconsciously, the rural is being measured and judged by its norms, and at the same time the rural group is tending more and more to accept these criteria. Rural education, religion, morals, health, business, work, and recreation are all being subjected to the testing of urban standards.

The result is rural urbanization. Rural sociology, insofar as it attempts to be a science of group life will consider its adequacy and in a measure approve the urbanizing process, since it can scarcely view isolation, retardation, impuissance, or whatever is indicative of cultural inferiority with favor. It will also be critical of the urbanizing influence insofar as it overrides and destroys certain elements of rural civilization. However, insofar as rural sociology approximates a pure science, it will be indifferent to everything except the social processes themselves. These it will describe, noting the similarities and differences between their operation under urban and under rural conditions, observing the reciprocal effects of city and country upon each other, and, above all, analyzing the phenomenon of community life among country dwellers.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Define several prevalent astigmatic viewpoints of both urban and country people relative to the two phases of our civilization that urban and rural sociology may correct.
2. To what extent have the eight major deficiencies listed by the Country Life Commission been remedied or worsened in the 30 years since its report?
3. How far would a report on the shortcomings of country life today have a different emphasis from that of 30 years ago?
4. Is the existence of an independent Rural Sociological Society evidence of a fundamental difference between general and rural sociology on any one or all of the following: content, method, objective, or state of development?
5. Set forth the reasons for and against including rural sociology in the curricular offerings of Sociology departments in urban colleges and universities.

Part II

THE STRUCTURAL ELEMENT

THE ANCIENT AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY

Why It Concerns Us

SOCIOLOGY is the science of human grouping. It studies the origin, growth, and disintegration of groups; it is concerned with their processes or behavior, with their composition, their structure, and their adequacy as agencies of human survival and well being. If, therefore, we are to understand American country life, we must study the wider phenomenon of rural grouping in the world at large, and unless we go behind the present scenes to take account of the past, we shall fail to note the significance of group life among countrymen or to comprehend fully the American situation of today.

All social problems have a history. And usually their cause and their cure are largely revealed thru the unfolding of that history. Our rural life presents a grave problem, and according to the writer's viewpoint, the problem is in a peculiar sense tied up with the history of community development. To trace in some measure that history, ought, therefore, to give us the key to certain phases of the problem.

Let us, then, state the plan of procedure we are to follow. It is, first, to study the ancient community, then the early American rural community, and, finally, planned communities. We may so far anticipate what we expect to bring out by a few brief statements: (1) a collective mode of living has been the normal way of agriculturists until of late generations; (2) such a mode of living has been the most successful and satisfying for tillers of the soil; (3) the disintegration of this mode of living has been due to conquest, to the rise of urban industrial society, and latterly to the rapid westward expansion of civilization; (4) the isolated Amer-

ican mode of rural living is an unstable variant which is proving itself inadequate to the social situation; (5) coöperative effort and enterprise are indispensable for satisfactory rural life; (6) these readily arise and prevail where people have dwelt together collectively; (7) a reconstruction of our rural society along village community lines is desirable.

The Village Community

"The Village Community" is the name commonly used to designate the settlements of ancient agriculturists. Such settlements have been widely distributed thruout the Old World. They have existed in China and India from earliest times. Likewise in Europe the historian traces them across the plains of Russia, in the Baltic regions, thruout much of Germany, France, the British Isles, the Danube basin, and the Mediterranean countries.

The origin of the village community takes us back to the beginning of civilization itself, i. e., to the beginning of permanent settlements. For apparently this was the prevailing form of organization that early groups took in establishing fixed habitats. The appearance of this form seems also to have coincided with the rise of a dominant agricultural economy. Before the advent of such an economy, people were more or less nomadic as hunters or herdsmen. Altho nomads frequently cultivated some plants where they encamped for a season, these were never their main source of food. The hunting and fishing Indians of North America were thus agriculturists of a sort. So likewise, the pastoral Tartar tribes of Northeast Europe are said to pause in their wanderings for two or three months in the summer to raise some quick-growing grain. But practices of this sort do not really constitute agriculture. It exists only where people depend upon it for a living and have fixed abodes.

We find the early agriculturists of the Old World living in village communities. There are, of course, no records or other evidence to take us back to the origin of this mode of life. At best we get back only to a time when the social order was fairly well advanced. Hence, when we speak of this institution as the original

type among soil tillers, it must be understood that "original" refers only to the earliest form found associated with Old World civilization.

We may presume that in the beginning the village was generally composed of a kinship group. It may have been merely a composite family, or its expanded form, as Sir Henry Maine believed. This family, known as the Zadruga among the Southern Slavs, where it is common, consists of a group of kinsmen. Sometimes as high as sixty or seventy men are found in this joint family. The various families live in a communal fashion under the headship of an elected chief.¹ Altho none of the Zadrugas of the Slavs ever make a village, since the latter will commonly contain several of them, the village may nevertheless have had its beginning in a like kinship group.

Under a pastoral or herding system the clan tended to break down into patriarchal families. This signified that a weakening of the kinship bond was under way when permanent settlements began. The village community therefore acted as a group-preserving agency by substituting common territory for common blood as the basis of social organization. The fixity of abode and proprietary interest in the land were stabilizing influences inuring to the group's advantage. Among other things, as Kropotkin in *Mutual Aid* has pointed out, the independent family was recognized and emphasized by the village. Personal initiative also was fostered as it had not been in tribal life. Thus the advent of the village community marks not only the beginning of civilization and agriculture, but of a social order favoring the development of the private family and personal freedom under conditions assuring group security.

The Saxon Village

It is from Saxon England that we get our most complete knowledge of the ancient village. For a thousand years, from about 500 to 1500, the rural economy of England centered in this institution. The typical village almost always nestled beside some brook

¹ See Helèn Douglas Irvine, *The Making of Rural Europe*, pp. 40-44.

or stream. Water was necessary and settlements were made where it was available. Moreover, it was on the alluvial soil along the streams that agriculture was most easy. So conspicuous are these facts that the typical village has been called "The Valley Village." There may have been villages of a different type. Harold Peake has described two others, viz., "The Forest Village" and "The Moorland Village."² For our purpose it will be well to adhere to what is typical. In Saxon times the village settlement probably consisted of twenty to thirty or more families, living in rude houses built of "wattle and daub" or stone. Under the roof were sheltered also the domestic animals and the products of the soil. The buildings were grouped about an open space, usually roughly circular or oval in shape, the shape, however, depending much upon the conditions of the site. This space was small in some villages and fairly large in others.³ It has come to be known as the Commons or Village Green. In addition there were sometimes in the more fully developed villages garden plots about the houses. About the whole settlement was a fence or hedge, hence the name *tun* and later *town*.⁴ This part of the community was commonly known as the *tun*, Ham, or Thorp.

The second part of the community was the arable land. This consisted of three large fields held in common. For the purpose of cultivation each field was divided into long narrow strips measuring an acre in extent. These were separated by unplowed belts of grass called baulks. The acre was a furrow long, i. e., a furlong, and four rods or poles wide. The furrow was the length a yoke of cattle would pull the plow before resting and the rod was presumably the length of the stick or goad with which the oxen were driven.⁵

Strips scattered thru the three fields were assigned by lot to each family, so that no one would get all the good and no one all the poor soil. This allotment was probably made yearly. The soil was tilled by the joint labor of the village. Each man was obliged

² Harold Peake, *The English Village*, *passim*.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵ P. H. Ditchfield, *Old Village Life*, p. 95.

to sow the same crop as his neighbor. At the harvest each household received the yield of the acres allotted to it. A three-course rotation of crops was enforced, so that the soil might not be impoverished. One field was allowed to lie fallow each year.

Some of the more recent students of the ancient village, particularly Harold Peake, are inclined to think that not all villages in the British Isles had the three-field system. A few may have had a one- or a two-field system.⁶ But such were certainly not typical, even if their existence is finally proved.

The third part of the village community consisted of common meadows for pastures and hay, together with heath and woods. These uncultivated wastes commonly lay around the whole colony and stretched away to the wastes of the next village. The woodlands afforded timber for building, fencing and fuel, and also pasturage for the pigs.

The plan of allotting the arable fields was applied also to the meadows and pasture lands. Lots were drawn for the privilege of mowing hay. After it was gathered, the meadows became common. On a certain day in August, known as Lammas Day, the meadows were thrown open for pasturage. A mass was celebrated in which a loaf made from newly ripened wheat was used. Thus "Loaf Mass," or Lammas, became an important event of the year.⁷

The people of the village obviously carried on their affairs in a collective manner. Everything was arranged on the basis of equality. There was, however, division of labor with special privileges and services. Holdings, at least in Saxon times, varied. The peasant generally had about 30 acres of arable land, together with his share in the meadow lands, pasturage, and waste. In earlier times he had held 120 acres of arable land, for evidence indicates that a reduction in acreage had taken place with the growth of village population and feudalism. Beside the "Gebur," or typical villager, there were in Saxon times "Cottiers," whose holdings were five acres or a little more. Then the village had its bee-keepers, swine-herds, sheep-herds, ox-herds, goat-herds, cow-herds and function-

⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

⁷ P. H. Ditchfield, *Old Village Life*, p. 65.

aries of other sorts.⁸ All such functionaries were maintained by the community out of the common products. The governing body was the folkmoot, or village assembly. It regulated the affairs of the community.

Such was the ancient village community as it appeared in England during the Fifth Century. It had doubtless undergone considerable development from earlier days, losing some of its original simplicity and equality, and passing, in a measure, under the domination of forces destined eventually to alter it completely. The beginnings of the manorial system were already at hand. A description of that system will enable us to follow the process of change in village life.

The Manor

The term "Manor" came into the British Isles with the Normans. Thereafter a complete feudal system prevailed. *Domesday Book* of 1084 listed 60,251 fiefs. But no radical change was introduced into the agricultural village of that time. The principles of the manorial system seem already to have existed in fact, if not in name, in many villages. It had been developing probably from Roman days and was brought to perfection under Norman rule.

In Saxon times the village commonly had a "Lord." If free villages existed, they were probably exceptional.⁹ The lord held a goodly portion of land, took a lion's share of the produce of the community, exacted tribute of it otherwise, acted as judge over it, but rendered no needed service. He was an exploiter.¹⁰ Worse ones were to follow, but in him were presented the principles and practices of the feudal system. His presence suggested the Manor as we shall presently see it in Mediæval England. But otherwise the village did not much resemble that feudal institution in its fully developed form.

Whence came this lord? Maitland in *Domesday Book and Beyond* suggests that he arose under the late Saxon kings, the village in earlier Saxon days being wholly free.¹¹ Seebohm in his *English*

⁸ Peake, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

⁹ Peake, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹¹ F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, pp. 129, 339, 352.

Village Community tries to show that the lord was as old as Roman rule. He holds that the village community descended from the Roman villa and was always servile.¹² Roman lords probably did establish rule over some villages. Their houses have been discovered, especially in the south of England. Perhaps the "villa" was the Roman counterpart of the mediæval Manor.¹³ If so, it only shows that at this date conquerors of Britain were interfering with the village life that had been there before them. It does not prove that the village had originated with them. Indeed, a wealth of evidence points to just such an origin as was indicated in earlier paragraphs of this chapter. It is also pretty clear that the lord, and eventually the full-grown manorial system, were late additions to the village community. As Professor Vinogradoff has said: "The Communal organization of the peasantry is more ancient and more deeply laid than the manorial order. Even the feudal period shows everywhere traces of a peasant class living and working in economically self-dependent communities under the loose authority of a lord whose claims may proceed from political causes and affect the semblance of ownership, but do not give rise to the manorial connection between estate and village."¹⁴

One thing is clear, that however far back the lord may be traced, his appearance and the rise of the manorial system were due to conquest. We know that the Norman conquest made the system universal in England. Much indicates that the Saxons already had a similar system. Gras says the manorial period was from 800 to 1500.

Even before the Saxons there is evidence that the Romans probably had something of the same sort. Recently an effort has been made to establish the lord over the village in central Europe some 1200 B. C. and then to import him into the British Isles with the coming of early Alpine peoples.¹⁵ In this theory we run across another amplification of the Nordic myth. And, perforce, the lord must be a Nordic conqueror. But we have already followed the speculation about the beginnings of the Manor too far. It would

¹² Ditchfield, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

¹⁴ Quoted by Ditchfield, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

¹⁵ Peake, *op. cit.*, Chap. VI.

profit us nothing to cumber our minds with the imaginings of Nordic mythology. Hence, we leave the question of origins and turn at once to a study of the Manor itself.

The Manor of Norman England was usually the village community or township as we have described it. Sometimes several village communities were united into a single Manor. Vinogradoff describes the Manor as "an estate or district in which the central house is the hall."¹⁶ The "hall" was the seat of the lord. According to Norman law, there could be no land without a lord; hence all England was divided into Manors. The same lord might hold several. One of William's followers held 139 Manors. But such estates were possessed only by a few great lords. Ordinarily the lord held but one estate.

The Norman Manor was a political system imposed upon the villages by the invaders for the purpose of domination and exploitation. If the system represented by the Saxon lord in parts of England was likewise an institution of domination and exploitation, it was apparently imperfectly developed and mild in comparison with the Norman. The Saxon theory was radically different from the Norman. The former looked upon the village or township as a property-owning and self-governing institution in its own right. The lord held certain jurisdiction over the community, sharing its land and participating in other advantages in return for his unneeded and self-imposed services. He did not claim ownership of the whole community and absolute authority over it. The Norman lord did. All the land belonged to the King by right. Absolute ownership was assigned by the King to such lords and under such conditions as he saw fit. Many Manors were not assigned to underlords, but kept by the King himself.¹⁷ Thus the Norman Manor was in theory and practice a thoroughgoing exploitative system. The destruction of the village community in the end was the logical outcome of this system.

Much the same system of agriculture as the village followed continued under the Manor. The social organization, however, was altered. With that we are chiefly concerned. In our account of the

¹⁶ Quoted by Ditchfield, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁷ Peake, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.

village we assumed a status of virtual freedom and equality among the people. It was this status that the Manor destroyed. We do not attribute this decline of freedom to the Norman institution alone but to the whole manorial development, with which it coincided, liberty being affected by whatever forces chanced to produce the Manor. We are only describing the organization as of Norman times, for there we find it most complete. However, there can be no doubt that a very important part of this change was due to Norman influence.

The layout of the Manor was, of course, not greatly different from that of the village. There was the same field plan. New features were the lord's house and the *demesne* and other changes that he sometimes introduced. In some cases, the *demesne*, or farm, was a compact portion of the best meadow lands which he had enclosed. More often the *demesne* was not a compact holding, but consisted of strips scattered through the arable fields, the meadows, and pastures. These might include half of the whole land and all the meadows and woods besides. The Norman lords habitually seized more and more land for their exclusive use.

The villagers were of several classes, and all were in some kind of bondage to the lord. This bondage was either legal or economic. Lands which had once been communal were now held only in tenantry. The status of the various classes will make clear just how the manor was organized.

1. *At the head of the village group* were the *sokemen*, or free-men, later called yeomen. "The yeomen, the bowmen, the lads of dale and fell" had been rewarded by the lord with grants of land and other privileges for service as warriors. Their tenure was later known as "free socage," and denoted "an estate held by any certain and deterministic service, as by fealty and money rent, or by homage and fealty without rent."¹⁸ The *sokemen* were not bound to the land as were villeins. They could leave the Manor at will. They had to pay the lord a fixed rent either in money, kind, or labor, or all three, but otherwise he bargained with them one

¹⁸ Ditchfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

by one instead of commanding them.¹⁹ This class was not large.

2. *The chief class numerically* and the one constituting the heart of the manorial village was the villani or *villeins*. Two-thirds of the manorial population were of this class as late as 1300.²⁰ They were *adscripti glebae*, i. e., bound to the soil, and could not leave the Manor except as the lord willed. Upon them fell the support of the lord. They had to till his *demesne* and render other services. Two kinds of work had to be given by them. One was "week work," involving two or three days' labor each week for the lord. The other, "boon-work," was special labor in seeding, harvest, and at times of special urgency. In fact, the villein's services were at the command of the lord at all times. More than half his time was thus preëmpted. In addition he had to pay rent, furnish oxen for the lord's plow-teams, and a fine, or "merchant," when his daughter married.

The villein held land from which he supported his family. The usual holding was a *virgate*, or 30 acres in the arable fields. Once it had been a *hide*, or 120 acres, but the growth of the manorial system had cut it down. Sometimes the holding was only a half-virgate. These holdings were inherited from generation to generation, but always the heirs had to pay the lord a *heriot*, i. e., the best ox, horse, or other chattel.²¹

The villager as a villein was thus in both personal and economic bondage. His only escape was by flight to the city, from whence no lord could retrieve him, so city law decreed.

3. *A third class was the cottars or cottagers*. They held never more than five or six acres of land and often only a quarter of an acre or none at all. They were the humblest of tenants. They kept no oxen and thus did not have to plow the lord's land. But one day's work a week was required of them, and during harvest, boon-work also.²² Rental of poultry, eggs, or honey also was due the lord. Their free time was hired to freemen or to the lord himself. When engaged in boon-work, the cottar was furnished food

¹⁹ Mary Bateson, *Medieval England*, pp. 106, 112.

²⁰ N. Hone, *The Manor*, p. 58.

²¹ Ditchfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 112.

and drink. His right to his cottage and land and some live stock was a permanent one. He was, however, bound to the soil, as were all villeins, i. e., *adscripti glebae*.

4. A fourth class, very few in number, was the *servi*, or slaves. These are said to have entirely disappeared in the century following the Norman conquest.²³ They became cottars.

5. In addition to these classes, there were a number of *arisans*, the *priest* of the church, *officials* and *functionaries* of various sorts. The smith, carpenter, baker, and miller were a part of its life. And so were the ox-herds, bee-keepers, sheep-herds, swine-herds, cow-herds, with their respective duties.

The most important official was the *bailiff*, a man of almost innumerable duties and responsibilities. He was virtually a manager, superintendent and overseer all in one. He was responsible to the lord or to his steward.

The *provost*, elected by the community, was an under-bailiff. His chief duty was to see that the work was done well and to prevent dishonesty. The hayward was another official, who inspected the fields. He saw that boon-work was performed and the lord received his due of labor. The plowmen were the expert tillers and cultivators of the soil. They had charge of the whole process.²⁴

The manorial village of Twelfth and Thirteenth Century England was thus a little world in itself, self-sufficient and independent. It grew its own food, provided flax and wool for clothing its inhabitants, and got by barter what it needed from the outside.

The affairs of the Manor were regulated by assemblies called courts. The lord or his steward presided over these. There were two courts which pertained alone to manorial relations and interests; one of these was the *Court baron* and the other the *Customary court*. The first was concerned with the free tenants, their rents and relations to the lord. The second dealt with servile tenants, their services, duties, offenses. It made arrangements for all common tillage and other work. Quarrels among the villeins and offenses against the lord were adjudicated by it. This court was in some measure a survival of the folkmoor of Saxon times.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 121-128.

The third court was the King's Court, or *Court leet*. It was held on the Manor to try criminal offenses and infractions of the law of the realm.²⁵

Such, in general, was the English Manor. In Figures 2 and 3 the layout of a particular Yorkshire Manor, Hooton Pagnell, will be seen, first, as it appeared in the Thirteenth Century, and, second, as it exists today, a landlord's estate. It has remained intact since the Middle Ages, a survival of an ancient communal form. Hooton Pagnell embraces an area of 1,967 acres running 2½ miles N. and S. and 1½ miles E. and W. At its center lies the village, where dwell less than 200 persons. Among them are found thirteen tenant farmers and forty-odd agricultural laborers. No farmer owns any of the soil he works nor does any have a compact holding. The farms, which range from 20 to 400 acres, consist of portions scattered thruout the three great fields much as in feudal times.

The history of this Manor is an unbroken story of landlordism, villeins, and tenants from Domesday to the present. At Domesday ⅓ of the arable land was in the lord's *demesne* while the other ⅔ was worked by 12 unfree villeins. In 1297 the manorial village had 10 households. No villein held at that date a full hide (120 acres) of land, or had a full team of oxen. Since that time, altho retaining its form, Hooton Pagnell has undergone numerous changes in the layout of the land, in the system and method of farming, in the privileges and responsibilities of ownership, in the systems of land tenure, in the social and economic position of tenants and their rights, and in many customs and practices of the community.²⁶ However, enough remains to this day to give one a fair notion of what the rural community of feudal England was like.

Village Decay

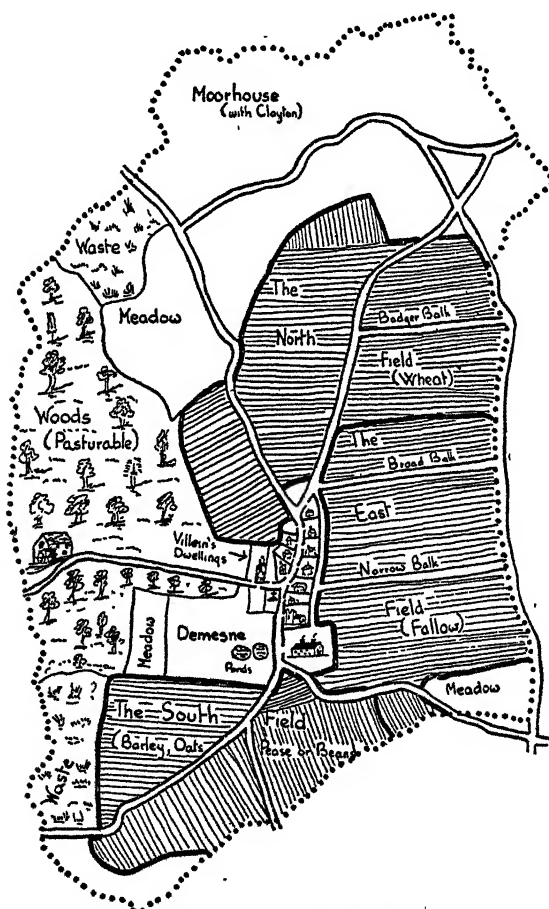
The village community was foredoomed to destruction under the English manorial system. That might was right, was implicit

²⁵ Peake, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

²⁶ For a full account see Arthur G. Ruston and Denis Whitney, *Hooton Pagnell, the Agricultural Evolution of a Yorkshire Village*, Edward Arnold and Co., London, 1934, *passim*.

in the feudal theory of land holding. The local lord held his Manor from some overlord or the King. But the idea, already pointed out, that the land was the property, not of the village community, but of the feudal class always remained as a possible pre-

2. Hooton Pagnell, a Thirteenth-Century English Manor



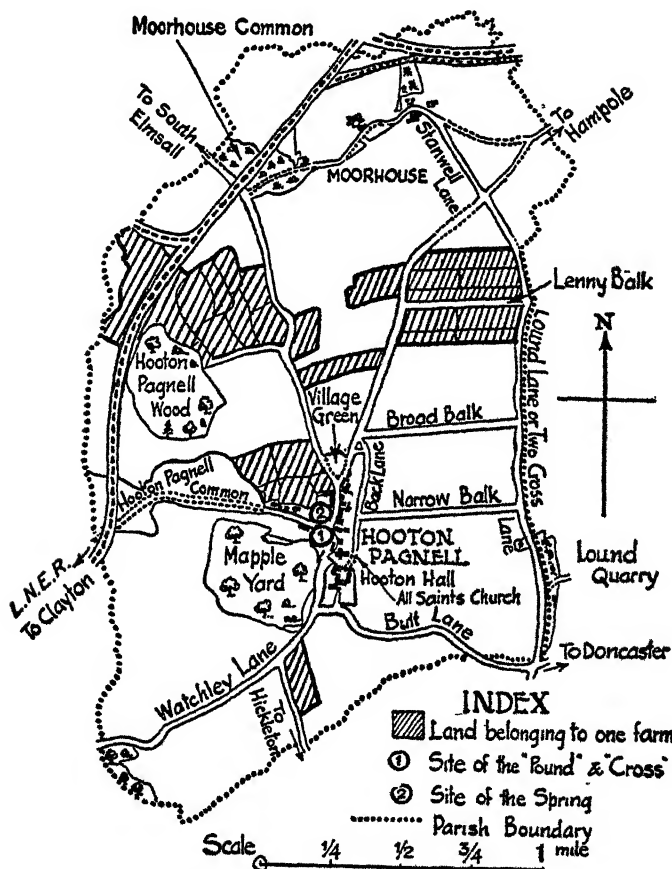
HOOTON PAGNELL, 1260

Source: A. G. Ruston and Denis Whitney, *Hooton Pagnell, The Agricultural Evolution of a Yorkshire Village*, Edward Arnold and Co., London, 1934, p. 56.

text for the lords, by the exercise of their power, to appropriate the lands for their own profit and pleasure.

The legal basis for the aggressions of the feudal lords was laid in the Statutes of Merton (1235), and Westminster (1285). These

3. Hooton Pagnell Today



HOOTON PAGNELL, A.D. 1931

Source: *Ibid.*, p. 12.

laws enabled them to become the owners of the waste and meadows, not mere guardians. Immediately they began to enclose these communal lands in their private demesnes. Mansions were erected and a separation of lord and community, both spatially and socially, not known in Saxon days, began to appear. The Statute of Merton, Peake regards as the turning point in the history of the English village.²⁷ It marked the legal beginning of a process of encroachment which eventually destroyed the community.

The rise of industrial society and capitalism in the middle of the Thirteenth Century gave new occasion for greater raids upon the village. The domestic system of manufacturing was developing with the expansion of trade. A money economy and the accompanying wage system came into existence. The effects of these changes penetrated to the Manors. The products of pastoral farming, such as wool, meat, and leather, were in growing demand.²⁸ As money came into use, the services and obligations of the villeins were commuted to cash payments. Land was let for cash rental. The profit motive expressed in money returns came to play an increasing part in the lord's plans.

Following this came the Black Death of 1349, devastating the country until half the population died. On many Manors large numbers of the customary tenants were swept away. No one remained to inherit their lands and the lord appropriated them. The tenant's services and rents had been largely commuted to wage payment. The decimated population made laborers few and wages high. Cultivation thus became more costly and less profitable than sheep-farming, with the rise of demand for wool at home and abroad. So, many lords turned their *demesnes* and all the tenant holdings they had acquired into sheep pastures. They enclosed the meadows and wastes of the villages also, thus dispossessing the villeins and cottars of their ancient communal privileges. In this way the manorial lord established a monopoly of stock-raising. Large numbers of peasants thus became landless wage-earners. Others, the more privileged ones, enclosed their holdings as the lord had done and thus

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 150.

²⁸ Irvine, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

established independent farms. Many others still, in the course of the succeeding couple of centuries, became vagabonds.

This *First Agrarian Revolution*, as it is known, lasted from around 1400 or 1450 to 1600. The main trend was toward the engrossment of estates, the dispossession of the peasants, and the decay of the village. Efforts to stay the movement did not avail. A system of *Latifundia* in place of village communities became established.²⁹

This First Agrarian Revolution in England brought only the first installment of the *Latifundia*. It remained for the *Second Agrarian Revolution* to give new impetus and complete the work. This took place from 1700 or 1730 to about 1850. It was one phase of the Industrial Revolution. The rapid growth of city populations created new markets for agricultural products. In England the particular demand was for a greatly increased food supply. Impetus was thus given to the improvement of methods of soil cultivation. Scientific agriculture arose, and farming became highly commercialized and capitalistic. The landlords had the capital and made the most of their opportunity. A new greed for land resulted, and the enclosure movement began anew after the lull of a century. Urban capital, joined with rural, carried forward the engrossment of estates, until the middle of the Nineteenth Century saw the destruction of the village community in England completed.

Capitalistic landlords suppressed the tenants either by reducing them to wage-earners or by expelling them from the villages. The small holders were bought out; they were dispossessed by fraud; they were forced out because they had not the means to fence their lands; they fell into debt in an effort to survive, and when prices for farm stuff fell, the landlords got their mortgaged farms. Writers of the time tell of the depopulation that followed. Parishes that had had hundreds of farmers and cottagers were reduced to a very few families, sometimes to one or two. They tell of

²⁹ Miss Irvine in her book, already referred to, uses this term to describe the large estate held by a landlord for income and profit but without other interest in it. See Chap. IV.

increasing poverty and unemployment and the necessity for poor relief; of wretched hovels and the growing scarcity of lodging of any sort for the dispossessed; and finally, of the great exodus to the cities, as factories were built and industrialism became supreme.³⁰

In the *Deserted Village* Goldsmith probably presents a correct picture of the fate of these communities and the cause of their decay:

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.

The Ancient Village Today

In some lands once dotted with villages there are now none. In others they persist, tho under radically different form from the ancient type. Elsewhere they remain much as in the beginning. By and large they are still numerous. Someone has estimated that there are probably 2,000,000 of them in the world. At any event, the greater part of the agriculturists of the globe still live in some form of village community.

Capitalistic farming has rarely gone to such extremes and wrought such havoc with country life as in England. On much of the continent, altho effecting changes in agriculture, it has not destroyed village life. The small holder still dwells and flourishes in his community. Such communities dominate the countryside. They are of varying sizes, ranging from a mere handful of dwellings to scores and hundreds, but small and large alike, they remain exclusively farmers' communities. Their sole and single business is agriculture. They are in no sense trade centers after the fashion of the American village. They are not shipping points, as with us, for most of them are not on railways. They are just homes of

³⁰ Irvine, *op. cit.*, Chap. VIII.

farmers, villager and farmer being interchangeable terms. Outside such villages there are not many farmers to be found in much of Europe. Isolated farmsteads are not common. The peasant of Russia, Germany, or France is thus a member of a real community, of a compact group, living in a collective manner.

The Russian Village

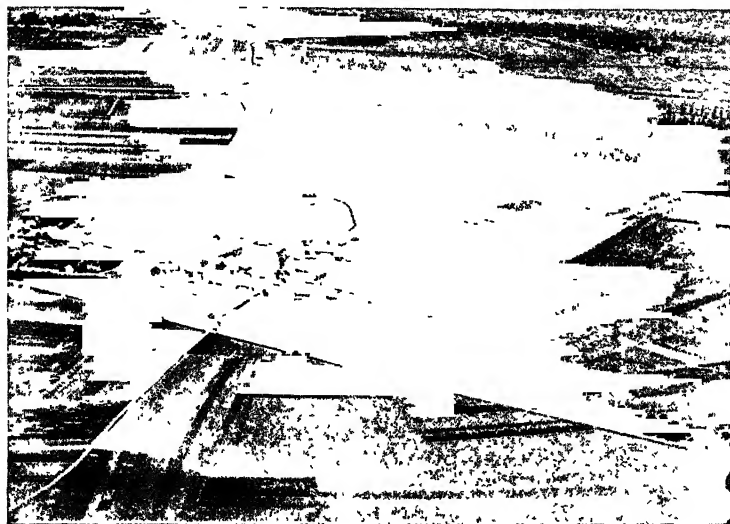
The "Mir," as the old Russian village was called, was the most primitive type surviving until recently. A brief description of it will convey some idea of the collective mode of life. Along a single street there would be a group of houses close together, perhaps almost touching. The barns would be joined to the house, or sometimes built together a short distance away. In the center of the village there would be a church. Lying about this cluster of farmsteads would be land for gardens, known as "homestead land." Immediately about these buildings and grounds would be an area for pasture for the herds of the community. Farther out would lie the tillable lands, arranged as of old in three fields. These were cropped by a system of crop rotation. One field would grow wheat, barley, or rye; one, flax and oats or potatoes; and the third would be left untilled. This arable land, like all the rest, was owned by the community but cultivated by individual households. It was divided into strips which were redistributed periodically among the families. Every ten or twelve years each family would be allotted strips in all the fields in amount according to the number of eaters or workers in the household.

In addition to arable and pasture lands, there would be meadows and forests. The meadows furnished hay, the allotments being distributed each year to the various households. The forests would likewise be allotted every few years among the village households. From these, timber and fuel were secured.

The Mir had at its head the village elder, or "starosta." Its affairs were regulated by an assembly of the villagers. Both men and women participated in this. Important functions performed

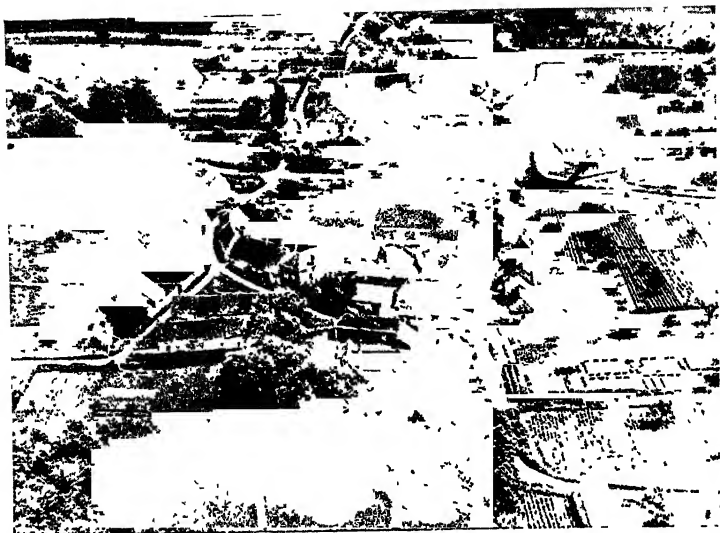


4. Agricultural Villages of France

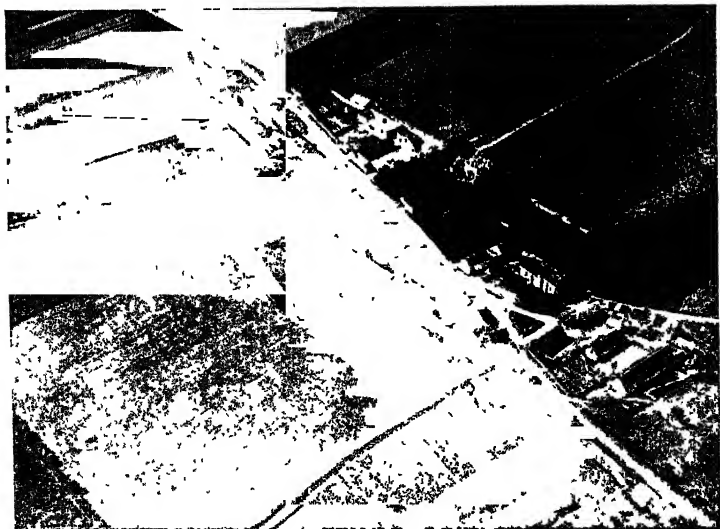


Agricultural Villages of France Showing the Division of Land into Strips

Both views from Aeroplane, courtesy World Agricultural Society

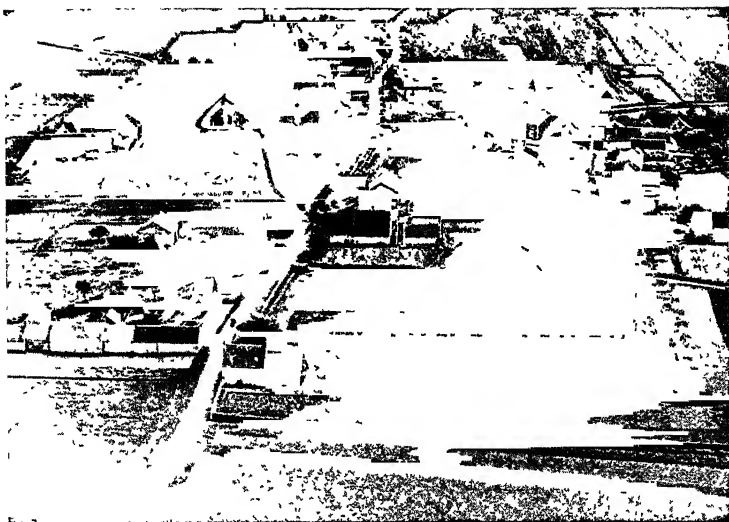


6. A Close View of a French Agricultural Village

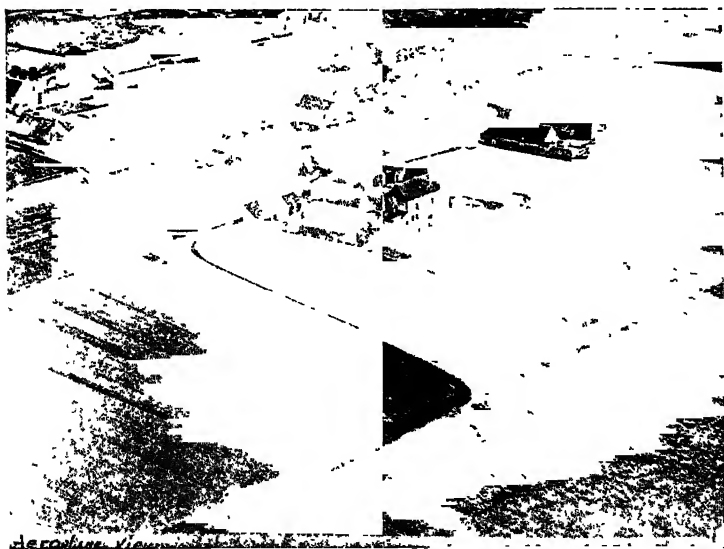


7. A French Agricultural Village Showing Larger Fields

Both views from Aeroplane, courtesy World Agricultural Society



8. French Agricultural Village Showing Farmsteads and Home Lots



9. French Agricultural Village Showing Farmsteads and Home Lots

Both views from Aeroplane, courtesy World Agricultural Society

by this assembly were the periodic reapportionment of lands and such matters as pertained to their common interests.

So much for the typical farmers' community of Russia as it existed up to the Revolution. Some ten or twelve years before the Revolution, the Czar's Government had started a movement to establish private landownership by permanently apportioning the fields of the *Mirs*. This had involved also settling the owner on his land and disintegrating somewhat the compact village. Little headway was made by this movement. With the coming of the Revolution, the peasants seized the lands of the government along with those of the nobility. These, together with the village community lands, were then reapportioned according to the old "land community" method. Such separate holdings as had been established under the Czar were swept back again into the communal system. The Soviet Government declared all lands to be the property of the State. Then followed the collectivization of agriculture and the abolition of individual allotments thruout the U.S.S.R. However, the collective system did not change the form of the village.

The significant thing about the Russian *Mir* was its communal features, such as compact settlement, collective ownership of land, and the participation of each family in the common enterprises and affairs of the village.

Elsewhere in Europe generally the village community of today has discarded most of these characteristics. Private ownership of land prevails in France and Germany. Each family enjoys economic independence, free from the trammels of community direction. The compact settlement, however, still remains, and in the life and work of the peasants many collective habits still hold sway.

Sociologic Consequences of Communal Life

In the psychologic and sociologic consequences of this mode of living lies its chief interest for us. They consist essentially in the formation of habits of thinking and acting together. These in turn

make it possible for the farmers of Europe to carry on large-scale coöperative enterprises in credit, production, marketing, purchasing, education, etc., to the end that agriculture is a profitable and satisfying occupation. The influence of the village mode of living is thus much broader and more far-reaching than the confines of the local group. The communism of the old Mir, for instance, is reflected in the behavior of the Russian nation. It has particular meaning for the student of country life in that it is responsible for a remarkable system of coöperative organization. In other countries, where rural villages exist without much, if any, collectivism in property, there is found a similar development of coöperation of one sort and another. Even in Denmark, where the ancient village has been gradually decentralized or abandoned for the separate farmstead, the habits and traditions of the old order persist with unabated force. They are foremost among the factors responsible for the development of the greatest and most "superlatively effective" system of agricultural coöperation to be found in the world.

Europe is crowded. Land is limited and agriculture is an intensive process carried on by small holders. Such farming has many disadvantages economically. Machinery and other costly materials cannot be afforded by the individual farmer. Marketing and buying supplies are rendered peculiarly difficult, and the risks are greater than for the large-scale farmer. Nevertheless, in the face of these handicaps, millions of the farmers of Europe are singularly successful. Coöperation is the means to this success. It is the secret of their system, and the secret of coöperation itself is fundamentally the community life out of which it has arisen.

This fact, as Helen Douglas Irvine, sometime member of the staff of The International Institute of Agriculture, has emphasized, is often overlooked. She says that "the communal life of peasant families, and that of village communities in every part of Europe has implanted the instinct to work and to own jointly with his fellows in the nature of the peasant."³¹ She goes on to say that even where villages are no longer important, the "survivals of the joint enterprises of village communities" are many. And "the

³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 188.

passage from such customs to coöperation on the modern plan was in some cases immediate and spontaneous.”³² Instances of this she cites from Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavia. Her conclusion is that “where the communal life of the village has not been too much depressed,” it naturally and spontaneously develops coöperative enterprises without any help of professional organizers.³³

Where farmers do not live in village communities, as in America, they fail to get together spontaneously and effectively in joint enterprises. There has been nothing in their experience to condition them for such activities. No traditions or habits give any foundation for it. They may see the advantages of coöperation when it is presented; they may even respond to the organizer’s appeal and join associations; but in the long run and at the crucial hour, the American farmer commonly fails. Thus our coöperative ventures have been belated. From them much of the assurance of a natural and spontaneous movement has been absent, presumably because there is no heritage of communal living. As has been said of the German farmers: “The small landowning peasants do not have to bother about getting together. They are together already; have been together during a thousand years of history. Their children play together, sing together in the village schools, dance together in the seasonal holidays, practice together in the village bands and song clubs. They come to know one another thru and thru. They know after a while who among them has the grace and grit to stick tight in a farm organization, say, in a coöperative credit union, a type of organization that exists in almost every farm village in Germany. . . . What coöperative farm enterprise lacks in America is compact country community life, and this lack is usually fatal to farm organization of every sort. Successful farm coöperation must be based on country community life.”³⁴

There are, assuredly, in American rural society other factors

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 190.

³⁴ E. C. Branson, “Farm Village Life in South Germany,” *Rural America*, January, 1925, p. 11.

that must be reckoned with in appraising the difficulties of co-operation, but we must agree that this one is fundamental.

One other consequence of the village mode of living remains to be mentioned. I refer to the attachment to country life that it engenders. Such attachment is manifest in a degree never seen in the New World. People of Europe wish to live in the country rather than in the city. They hunger for the land. To be sure, there is also a rural exodus, but it is because there is no place for an increasing population in the village community and not because of a distaste for country life, as in the United States. One may, of course, easily overestimate the influence of the village in producing this devotion to the soil, but when we consider how the compact group mitigates isolation and removes other handicaps, it cannot be ignored.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Were the people of the mediaeval manor more or less secure than the independent farmers of America today?
2. What were the sociological advantages and disadvantages of the ancient village community for old world farmers?
3. Did communal land-holding furnish the basis for the ancient village, or did other common ties lead to communal land-holding?
4. How far did communal land ownership in the ancient village foster communalism in all other matters, and how far did it tend to build up private interests in reaction against the practice?
5. Why was the land divided into three fields?

COLONIAL AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Colonization

IN THE Seventeenth Century the Old World began seriously to colonize the New. It will be recalled that by that time the manorial system in England had generally undermined the village community. Enough of the latter remained, however, to give it some chance of survival. Moreover, a vigorous tradition of its better days must have been cherished by the peasantry. Hence we have two forms of rural settlement and organization in the mother country to reckon with when migrations to America began. Naturally, we should expect both forms to be transplanted by the Colonists; and that is precisely what happened.

Two social classes were represented in these types of organization: one, the feudal class of various ranks from the great lords to the country squires; the other, the peasantry and yeomanry. The feudal class had the wealth and power of the realm and social customs and habits of its own. Along with ideals of ease and luxury went methods of domination and exploitation. The peasantry, as we have seen, were losing out at this time on every hand. They were being reduced to landless wage-earners and expelled from the villages of their forefathers. Poverty and discontent were abroad in rural England. A thirst for freedom and opportunity was stirring the ranks of the villagers. Representatives of both the nobility and the peasantry turned to America; the one in search of fortune and adventure; the other in quest of homes and freedom.

From the peasant and yeoman class the colonists of New England were largely recruited. They came directly from the country parishes or from a background immediately in touch with them.

sciences became aware of this interesting fact. Since then, interest in country life has awakened and sociologists have been giving attention to the forces that have determined our history. Among these must be included the village settlement, and to a more detailed account of its establishment in Colonial New England we may profitably turn.

Studies of the records of the original towns of Massachusetts reveal their communal nature. Plymouth, Salem, Dorchester, Roxbury, Watertown and Cambridge are cases in point.³ All these were projected on the lines of the Old World agricultural villages. The compact form of settlement with outlying fields, a land system with the houses and home lots fenced in and owned in severalty, common fields outside the town, and a surrounding tract of absolutely common and undivided land used for pasturage and woodland under communal regulations were the significant features.⁴

We may take Salem, the oldest of the Massachusetts Bay communities, for an illustration. Its self-regulating history goes back to 1630. From about this time its records begin to throw interesting light upon our subject. In Salem village the home lots, or grounds for buildings, garden, corn raising, and cow pens, were two acres in extent. In other towns they were often larger. Since Salem was partly a fishing as well as an agricultural village, there were some who had only home lots. The majority, however, had in addition arable lands. These were parceled out among heads of families, the minimum being ten acres. Large families received more. Family holdings, after custom immemorial, were scattered among the several arable fields. By 1640 Salem had ten such fields. Among these were Northfield, containing some 490 acres in ten-acre lots, and Southfield, embracing 600 acres.⁵ Until the middle of the Eighteenth Century these remained common fields owned and cultivated by the proprietors in common.⁶

The regulation of these fields was a matter for the village meeting, or if not for the whole village, then for the commoners of the

³ Anne B. MacLear, "Early New England Towns," *Columbia University Studies in Economics, History and Public Law*, Vol. 29, No. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁶ H. B. Adams, *Common Fields of Salem*, p. 8.

particular fields, as at Salem. They had to determine what crops to grow, the fencing, improvements, rights of pasturage, and whatever else pertained to their interest. The Salem records of 1680 specify how many cows, oxen, horses, and calves each proprietor could pasture.⁷

Salem and all other early towns had in addition to plow lands, meadows, pasture fields, woodlands, and village commons that were communal properties, wholly undivided. Salem had its "great pasture," and in 1636 we read of the town setting aside all the land "along the shore on Darby's fort side up to Mr. Humphrey's land and so to run along toward Marble Head 1120 pole into the land for the commoners of the town to serve them for wood and timber."⁸

The growth of the population led to the division of these common meadows, pastures, etc., into home lots for new families. Thus, relatively early such holdings began to be whittled away. The new comers became mere cottagers. They were granted home lots on the payment of rental but were denied the rights of commonage. This gave rise to a bitter fight at the close of the Seventeenth Century. The cottagers won the rights for which they contended in 1714, when a portion of the lands were set aside for their use. The remainder of the commons, including over 4,000 acres, was in 1722 divided among 1,132 claimants.⁹

Like their old world prototypes, these communities had their herdsman, who had charge of cattle, swine, geese, and other animals as they roamed over the common pasture and wastes. In opening the arable fields to the stock, Lammas Day was also observed in Salem.

In all these early towns founded before there was any governing body over the settlements of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the town meeting was supreme. It was composed of all male inhabitants, and untrammelled by any superior authority, it acted as the Saxon folkmoot did a thousand years earlier. Thus in all ways

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 92. ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 99. Quoted from *Salem Town Records*, p. 34.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 104. Quoted from *Essex Institutes Col.* 20, p. 178. The report of the proprietors' meeting, November 22, 1714.

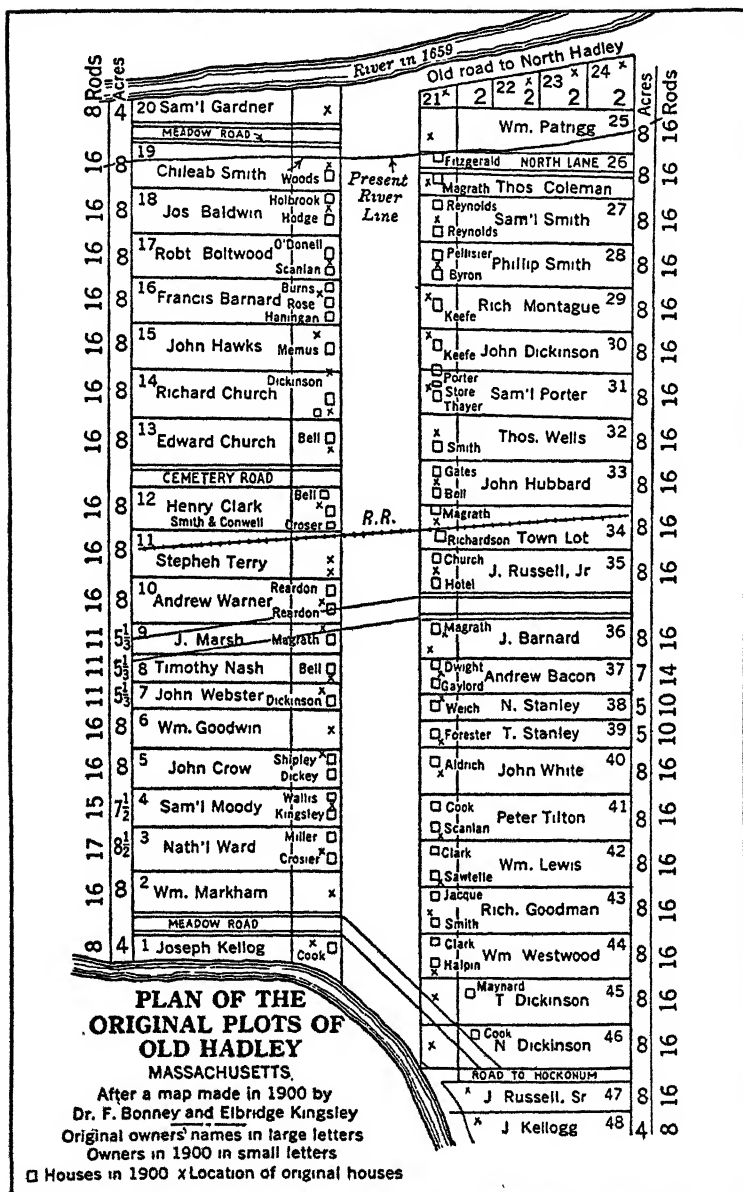
the early New England settlements were true village communities.

As the colonists pushed inland during the next century and a half succeeding the planting of the original towns, their mode of settlement remained the same. The records of such towns reveal their communal character. Even today the original plots may often be observed, little changed since the pioneer generation. This is notably true of those towns that have remained agricultural thruout their history. Many such are to be found in the Connecticut Valley. Unlike the first group of communities, which thru urbanization have lost by now all the earmarks of their communal infancy, these rural towns, remaining agricultural, have retained most of theirs. We may with profit examine a few of them.

Old Hadley is one, founded in 1659 by fifty-three families who had found their way up the Connecticut Valley from Hartford and Wethersfield. Religious disagreement had caused them to seek the wilderness that they might find peace and harmony, as they expressed it. On a smiling plain enclosed by an ox-bow bend of the river they selected a location. The original plot of the village is seen on the map, as it was reproduced some years ago. Along a single street were built the houses. This street stretched across the plain from river to river. It measures one mile in length and twenty rods in width, and embraces forty acres of land. Besides being an avenue for travel, it is also the village commons. Originally it was the chief pasturage of the community. A stockade ran behind the houses and, resting on the river at either end of the plot, formed a secure enclosure for the town cattle, swine, sheep and geese. The rights of each family to the use of this pasturage were carefully defined by the town meeting.

Each family had a "home lot" of eight acres running back from the commons, the farmsteads being located on one end of the lots. In 1659 thirty-nine men were assigned lands in the home lots and the "great meadows." This arrangement reminds us at once of the ancient village layout.

The tillable and meadow lands lay chiefly in the ox-bow west of the farmstead site, known as the "great meadows." There three



10. Plan of the Original Plots of Old Hadley, Massachusetts

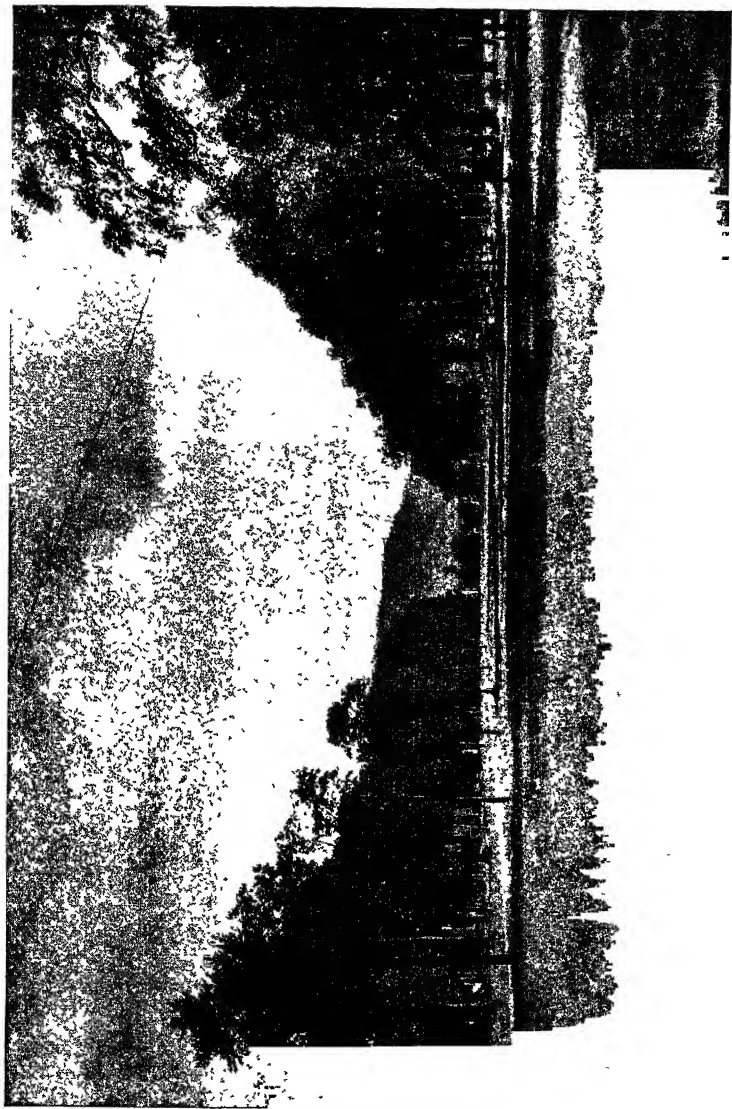
Source: *The Grafton Magazine*, Copyright, 1909, by the Grafton Press, 105 West 40th Street, New York

arable fields were developed, in which the various families held portions. The "great meadows" average about one-half mile in width and run for seven miles around the river. Upwards of 2,000 acres of land lie in that direction. Later, other fields and meadows were developed to the east of the village. On the well-timbered mountain sides and abutting plain were the woodlands of the community. The names of cultivated fields, meadow, and pasture lands have come down and are in vogue today. Many of the names suggest the use to which the fields were originally put. North Furlong, Indian Hill, Honey Pot, Cross Path, Plain Hill and Aqua Vitæ were arable fields in the "great meadow." Grass Hollow, Foot Meadow, Meadow Hill, and Pond Meadow probably indicate grass or pasture lands in the early days.

In spite of all the changes of ownership and such divisions and combinations as have been incidental thereto during more than two centuries, property holdings in Hadley today hark back to the old system of scattered allotments. The villagers of the present generation list their lands with reference to the various fields, in which small parcels are owned as of old. Thus one owner has land as follows: $\frac{1}{2}$ acre in Home lot, $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres in Great Meadows, $2\frac{1}{4}$ in Cross Path, $10\frac{1}{2}$ in Aqua Vitæ and 18 in Mt. Wood. Another holds 9 acres in Home lot, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in Bacon Hole, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in Plain Hill, 3 in Great Hill, $\frac{3}{4}$ at Fort River Bridge and 3 at Nooks. Still another possesses two Home lots of $5\frac{1}{2}$ and 6 acres each, 3 acres in North Cemetery, 4 in Great Hill, $3\frac{1}{2}$ in Great Landing, 6 in Grass Hollows, $9\frac{1}{2}$ in Nooks, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in Bacon Hill, $2\frac{3}{4}$ in Long Lot, $5\frac{1}{4}$ in Warner lot, and 116 in Mt. Wood.

Figure 12 has been prepared to show this scattered ownership. The pins in the fields with threads running to the houses along the streets represent the distribution of holdings. No attention was given to the home lots in making this map, as it is assumed that they belong in each case to the house-holder whose lands were traced.

The unfenced tillable fields of Hadley, as one sees them today, must present much the same appearance as when commonage was the custom of the village.



11. Looking Down West Street, or the Original Commons, in Old Hadley



12. Showing Land Holdings in Old Hadley in Relation to "Home Lots" as Now Held

The social life was as intimate and unified as the physical features of the village. It was, as W. H. Hudson has so beautifully said of a village in Wiltshire which he pictures as a situation where each house was a center of human life and the centers closely in touch with one another, "connected like a row of children linked together by their hands; all together forming one organism, instinct with one life, moved by one mind like a many-colored serpent lying at rest extended at full length upon the ground." In this organism, he goes on to say, all thoughts and feelings would freely pass from one to another, not necessarily by speech, but by virtue of the sympathy and solidarity uniting the people. No one would have a thought or emotion strange to his fellows. "The temper, mood, and outlook of the individual and the village would be the same." ¹⁰

A little farther up the Connecticut and back upon one of its tributaries lies Old Deerfield, whose founding dates from 1671. On the Connecticut itself, between Hadley and Deerfield, lies Sunderland, a town established in 1718. The accompanying maps of these villages show them as they were about fifty years ago. But barring minor changes, a new set of owners, and some extension of the village bounds, these maps show them much as they are today and as they were in general plan when first founded.

Characteristic features of the communal plan are at once apparent. The compact grouping, chiefly along a single street, is seen. Houses and barns are built on home lots of a few acres each. Altho not appearing on the maps, plow fields, meadows and pastures lie beyond the village sites. These have long since been divided into private holdings, whereas they were once held in commonage. Even now the absence of fences on the broad Sunderland plain gives hints of earlier conditions. Here too, as in Hadley, we find land is owned in parcels scattered here and there in what were once common fields. In the heart of these villages one observes such institutions as the church, town hall, school, and library. A natural community center is thus a feature of their organization.

¹⁰ W. H. Hudson, *A Traveller in Little Things*, pp. 110-112.

The germ of this traces back not only to early New England communities but even to early Christian England.

Without attempting in any way to trace the founding of village communities, suffice it to say that their establishment thruout New England was fairly general during the Eighteenth as well as the Seventeenth Century. The entire period of the colonial community extends from 1607 to 1800. Occasionally, undivided common lands are still to be found, giving evidence of this type of settlement. For example, within very recent years a New Hampshire village has faced the problem of dividing up a parcel of 6,900 acres. Conway, the town in question, was founded in 1765 by 69 families on a plantation of 23,040 acres. A 6,900 acre tract of woodland and pasture had come down in common ownership among the heirs of the original settlers. By the villagers of Conway this tract had always been looked upon and used in commonage. And the efforts of certain descendants of the original proprietors, after a lapse of more than a century, to acquire private ownership and control thereof created a local problem of great interest.¹¹

The Village Community in the West

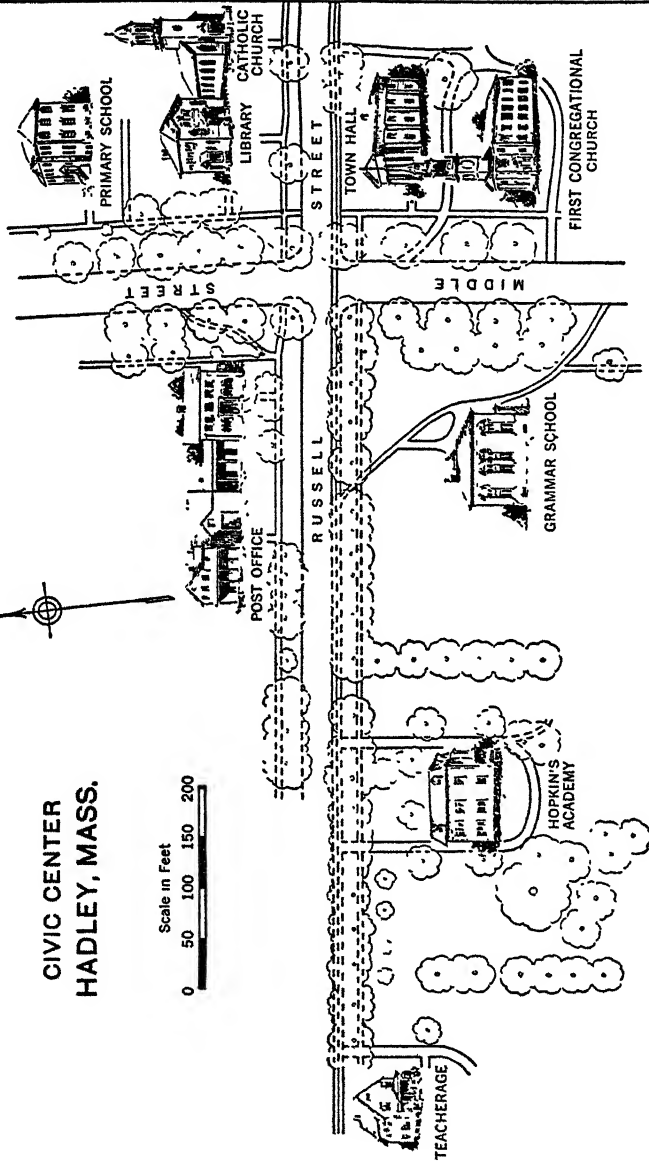
The westward migration of New Englanders failed to transplant the village community to the new regions. Conditions were unfavorable for its general development. Sporadic efforts to establish it did not always derive from New England. More often they came directly from the Old World thru religious sects or Utopian philosophies. In response to such influences, a number of communities arose in the states from New York westward during the early Nineteenth Century. Typical of these were the Oneida Community of western New York, the Zoar Community of eastern Ohio, the New Harmony Community of Indiana and the Amana Community of Iowa.

These settlements adhered in a general way to the modes already described. There was, however, in many of them an effort to realize complete communism. That, too often, was their ideal instead

¹¹ See Account by Hobart Pillsbury in the *Sunday Herald*, Boston, April 23, 1922.

CIVIC CENTER HADLEY, MASS.

Scale in Feet



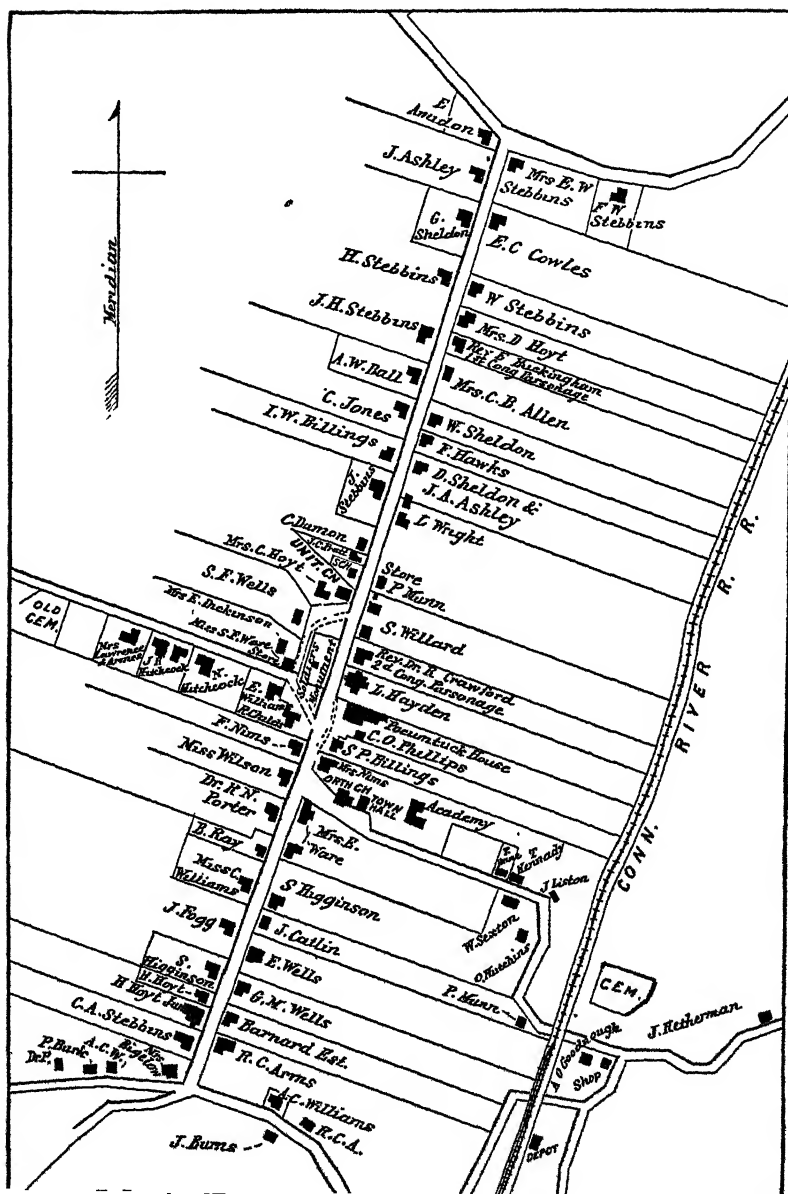
13. The Community Center of Old Hadley at the Present Time

Source: "Rural Planning," by Wayne C. Nason, *Bulletin No. 1441*, United States Department of Agriculture

DEERFIELD CENTRE

TOWN OF DEERFIELD

Scale 40 Rods to the Inch



of the moderate collectivism of the typical village community. This extreme idealism, together with the antagonism of a highly individualistic and competitive society round about, usually caused them to fail and quickly disintegrate. Hence their influence was brief and unimportant. Until a few years ago the most important survival of this sort was the Amana settlement in Iowa County, Iowa. Amana, or the Community of True Inspiration, was established in Iowa in 1854. It was a society of German Pietists, devoted to communism. On a tract of 26,000 acres of land which they purchased during the fifties and early sixties, seven villages were founded. They were all located within a radius of six miles from the central one. Each village had from forty to one hundred houses, grouped along a straggling street after the manner of the German Dorf. At one end of the street were the barns and sheds. At the other were workshops and factories. Fields, orchards and gardens were located in the rear of the houses on either side of the street. Each village had a church, school, bakery, dairy, post office, general store, and sawmill.¹²

These seven villages had, in 1908, a population of 1,700 to 1,800 in all and, taken together, they constituted the society of Amana. The society owned all property, real and personal. Each person contributed his labor and was given free maintenance, shelter, schooling, medical service, care in sickness and old age, and in addition, an annual allowance out of the common fund. This allowance was fixed in accordance with "justice and equity" for each individual or family.¹³ In other words, it was until finally dissolved a thoroughgoing communistic order.

The society was a corporation, governed by an elected Board of Trustees. There were thirteen of these chosen annually from among the village elders. Each village was governed by a group of seven to nineteen elders appointed by these Trustees. The elders directed the work and life of the local community.¹⁴

Altho the Amana villages did some manufacturing, their main business was agriculture. They were once fairly prosperous and

¹² Bertha M. H. Shambaugh, *Amana, the Community of True Inspiration*, p. 95.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Chapter II.

TOWN OF SUNDERLAND

Scale 60 Rods to the Inch.



contented communities. However, they did not grow in numbers nor spread to other sections. Their extreme communistic organization rendered them poorly adapted for successful propagation among ordinary farmers. Eventually they fell apart from internal dissension and had to abandon communal property ownership.

Notwithstanding the failure of the village community to take root generally outside of New England, its influence has not been altogether negligible. It was carried into Utah by the Mormons, and with local adaptations, became their mode of settlement. Consequently, in that state today is found the only important group of such villages in America outside of New England.

The explanation of the village among the Mormons lies in the fact that many of them came originally out of New England. They were Yankee farmers, reared in towns of the type described. Under favorable conditions they would naturally duplicate the patterns best known to them. Conditions, as it chanced, were exceptionally favorable in Utah when the Mormons migrated thither. The land had not been surveyed by the Federal Government and offered for sale in blocks of a certain form and size. The country was a desert, and the pioneers of necessity clung together along the streams to secure water. Indians were hostile, and compact modes of dwelling gave some protection. There was, moreover, the need for mutual aid in irrigation projects and the pooling of all resources if the colonists were to survive. Thus, the village was peculiarly adapted to the situation, and, being favored by the leaders of the Mormon church, became the accepted mode. With the rise of irrigation and small-hold farming, the situation further conduced to the perpetuation of village life.¹⁵

The first agricultural community of the Mormons, Salt Lake City, was laid out in 1847 somewhat after the village type. It diverged from the type in that it was plotted as a square and divided into ten-acre blocks. Each landholder was given a lot of

¹⁵ L. Nelson, "A Social Survey of Escalante, Utah," *Brigham Young University Studies*, No. 1, pp. 4-5. "Some Social and Economic Features of American Fork, Utah," *Brigham Young University Studies*, No. 4. Professor Nelson attributes the origin of the Mormon form of settlement to the "Plat of the City of Zion" designed by Joseph Smith, but this does not preclude the New England influence mentioned.

1¼ acres in the town. The fields lay beyond, and were divided into 75, 60, and 20 acre plots, which were assigned to householders according to the size and working ability of the family. With the plots went water for irrigation. This general plan became the model for all subsequent villages of Mormons in the inter-mountain region.¹⁶

A valuable study of one of these villages has been published by Professor Lowry Nelson. It is that of Escalante, located in Potato Valley. This village will serve to illustrate the type.

Escalante was founded in 1876 by a group of colonists from older settlements in Utah. In this unsurveyed locality, beside a creek, they plotted the town site of 18 blocks containing 5 acres each. These blocks were then divided into four lots of 1¼ acres each for home lots.¹⁷ On these lots were located the farmsteads, houses, barns, corrals, pens and sheds. No buildings were constructed in the arable fields. The lots also gave space for gardens and small orchards.¹⁸ To the north, east, and south of the town-site arable fields were laid out. Originally these fields were divided into 160-acre tracts, but with the understanding that they would be subdivided into farms of 22½ acres each.¹⁹

The accompanying map shows the community of the present. The farms comprise 13,016 acres, more than half of which is undeveloped and waste land. The original idea of confining the size of farms to 22½ acres has not been adhered to, for they now range from 5 to 680 acres. However, about one-fourth of the whole number are under 24 acres, and nearly another fourth between 25 and 49 acres in size. The larger tracts are chiefly range lands. Sixty per cent of all farms are under 100 acres.²⁰

It will be noted on the map that the smaller farms tend to cluster about the town site, while the largest ones lie farthest out. The average distance from the owners' homes to their fields is 2.3 miles. Only a few are more than three miles away.²¹

The map shows a village larger than the original one, containing a population of 1,010 in 1923. It is a distinctively farmers'

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

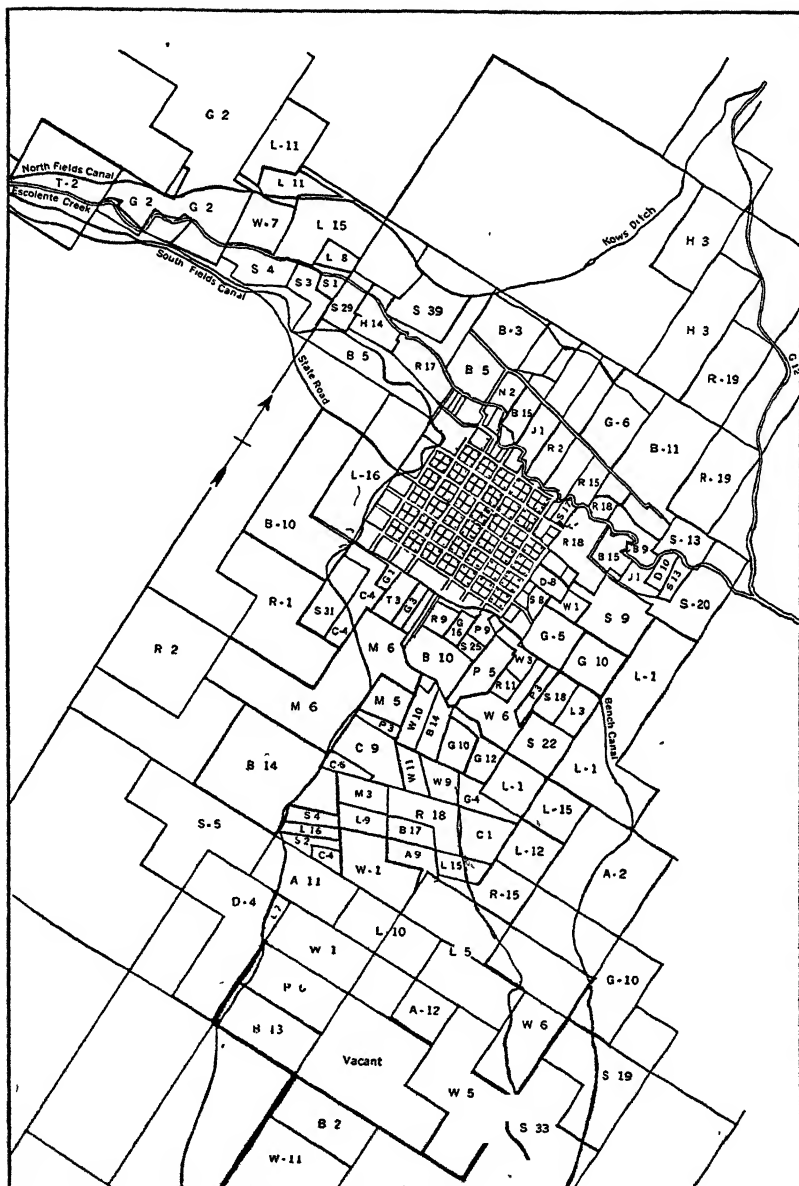
¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.



16. Plat of Escalante, Utah

Source: "A Social Survey of Escalante, Utah," by Lowry Nelson, *Brigham Young University Studies* No. 1. Provo, Utah, 1925, in Coöperation with U. S. Dept. of Agriculture

community with only a few laborers, craftsmen, and other non-agricultural workers included. The 180 heads of families include 135 active and three retired farmers.²² The type of farming is live-stock production. Soil cultivation is incidental thereto and largely for hay raising. It is stated that the village has reached its maximum size, considering its land resources.²³

Unlike the true village community, Escalante is an incorporated town, with a town board and mayor constituting its government. In several other respects it obviously does not conform to type. There have never been any common lands or any practice of commonage in cultivation. From the beginning each has had his own farm separate and distinct from those of his neighbors. There has thus been no need of community regulation of the agricultural process. However, the farmers have formed organizations for irrigation purposes. Two joint stock companies maintain the water canals and distribute the supply to users. Since, moreover, the chief business is live-stock raising, associations for promoting this business have arisen, two concerned with cattle and one with sheep.²⁴ These represent coöperative efforts.

An important aspect of this and all Mormon villages is religious homogeneity and organization. The one church, embracing all the people and supported by a system of tithing, closely parallels not only early New England but Old England village community life as well.

The author of the survey under consideration raises the question of the present status of Mormon villages in general. He finds, as in the case of Escalante, that those in the outlying and isolated sections of the state are maintaining their original compactness. Very few isolated farmsteads are developing in their environs. In newly developed irrigated sections, the isolated farmstead is the mode of settlement being adopted. In the older and more populous counties, such as Utah, Salt Lake City, Davis, Weber and Box Elder, it is also common to find people dwelling apart on their farms, as well as in villages. In these sections the village was the original

²² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

mode and still continues to be the dominant one, altho isolated farmsteads are increasing.

Whether or not these developments indicate disintegrative tendencies, the surveyor was not prepared to say. The forces at work were not obvious. Further study would be necessary to identify them. The isolated farmsteads might represent new farms and farmers. They might be of villagers who had moved out to the open country, or they might not. Hence no judgment is passed on the adequacy of the village under modern conditions nor upon its future prospects.

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Topics for Discussion

1. In determining the form of settlement in a new country which factor is likely to play the greater role, the geographic or the cultural?

2. Had the Pilgrims and the Puritans instead of the Cavaliers founded the Virginia colony and the Cavaliers the Massachusetts Bay colony instead of the Pilgrims and Puritans, would the village settlement have prevailed in Virginia and the Manor in Massachusetts?

3. Would the manorial system have arisen in the Colonial South had no African slaves been imported?

4. Thomas Jefferson was an admirer of the New England town or village system and wanted to have it adopted in Virginia. What factors prevented its adoption in Virginia?

5. John Locke drew up a feudal system known as the Grand Model for the proprietors of the Carolinas, dividing the land into provinces, seignories, baronies, and large estates with overlords, landgraves, free-men, yeomen, and serfs. The system failed to work in the Carolinas. What fundamental reasons account for the failure?

THE PRESENT DAY RURAL COMMUNITY

A FEW years ago it was the fashion to speak of the American farmer as a man without a community. In the South, the Middle West, and the West, one habitually thought of villagers and townsmen as living in real communities, since such places were definitely defined and often incorporated. But, living outside of compact districts, the farmer seemed to be altogether devoid of any community. Legally, at least, there was no way of locating him. He belonged to no population aggregate, could not usually be placed in any very well-defined geographic area, nor often designated by reference to any social unit. He was indeed of all men apparently the most detached, ungrouped, and isolated.

This peculiar dilemma began to arrest attention about twenty-five years ago. At that time various agencies were beginning to focus on the problems of country life and were at a loss to know what should be the unit of organization. Political subdivisions there were, but they seemed artificial. Natural units and groupings were needed. Hence an interest in first-hand studies of the rural situation was aroused. This led to the discovery and recognition of the open-country community.

The "Rurban" Area

The first important research project in the study of the structure of rural society was undertaken in Wisconsin by Dr. C. J. Galpin in 1915.¹ A single county was chosen for investigation. In this county were twelve hamlets, villages, and towns that served as trade centers. The areas about each of these centers whence came the farmers

¹ C. J. Galpin, "The Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community," *Research Bulletin No. 34*, University of Wisconsin Agr. Exp. Station.

to buy and sell, and secure other services, were carefully surveyed and mapped. Thus were discovered "comparatively determinable and fixed areas of land surrounding each center" whose inhabitants, averaging about the same number of families as in the center itself, were served by the center with precisely the same character of service as it rendered to the people within its corporate limits. Having established the existence of these social service zones, and having discovered that the service rendered was the same whether to the farmer or to the villager, Dr. Galpin concluded that such zones formed the boundaries of actual rural communities. It was contended, moreover, that these zones were also the areas of most frequent contacts and widest acquaintance among farmers. For at the center, farm families meet those from the whole zone. In this way a certain psychological unity, coinciding with the territorial area, was assumed to be present. The rural community was thus found to be a reality, but not generally an area apart from the village. It was a social basin contiguous to and determined by some sort of urban center. Wherefore it seemed proper to speak of the farmer's community as the "Rurban community," i. e., rural and urban in combination.

Dr. Galpin's analysis was at once hailed as a real discovery. At last the farmer's community seemed to have been identified and its characteristics revealed. Rural sociologists seized upon the notion and gave it wide vogue. It became the most prevalent way of defining the rural community.

However, the "Rurban" idea did not fully satisfy. Country life did not appear to all observers so completely town centered. Often the major interests and activities of farm people seemed to have other foci and to bear no relation whatever to urban centers. Furthermore, it was by no means clear that the inhabitants of a trade zone usually are aware of sharing anything in common. Indeed, it is not generally demonstrable that those dwelling in one sector of the zone are extensively acquainted with those dwelling in another. Psychological unity was wanting. The inadequacy of the rurban explanation thus revealed itself. Hence a new impetus was given to more extensive inquiry into the nature of rural community life.

The Neighborhood

The existence of rural neighborhoods apart from urban centers has always been recognized by those having intimate knowledge of country life. Names by which such areas are designated are encountered almost everywhere. For example, in a certain section familiar to the writer the names run as follows: Soule Settlement, The Pond, Walnut Grove, Hell's Point, Powers' Settlement, Pretty Prairie, and No-God's Corners. Just what such localities stood for in a social way, was not so well understood. Were the names merely convenient ways of designating localities or did they signify natural social groups? Might they in any sense indicate communities? When such questions arose the only way to answer them was to study the neighborhoods themselves. Under the direction of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, several such studies were projected. They were first undertaken in Wisconsin, New York, North Carolina, and Missouri. We shall present the findings of these original studies.

1. The *first* was undertaken in Dane County, Wisconsin, by J. H. Kolb. In order to discover neighborhood groups, the question was asked of each farm family: "By what name is the country neighborhood called in which you live?" It was explained that not the township or village or even the school district was meant, but only the country locality. This was on the assumption "that when a family recognized some grouping as its own, and was willing to confess this name as it would its own family name, there was evidence of group consciousness and unity."² It was, of course, understood that there might be true groups that had no local name. The answers were plotted on the map of the county. Lines were then drawn about those farms whose families professed membership in the same locality. Thus the boundaries of neighborhood areas were traced. These are indicated on the accompanying map.

In this county were found 121 groups of rural people within geographic areas characterized by locality names. These groups, moreover, had a local consciousness of unity. Practically the whole

² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

area of the county save "a comparatively uniform space surrounding cities and villages" was occupied by these neighborhood settlements.³

The chief sources of the group names were natural phenomena, such as hills, groves, valleys; family names; place of former residence; nationality; social institutions; and the township. The sources of the names were suggestive of the vital factors that had created and were perpetuating the groups. It was found, incidentally, that there had often been two or more such factors at work. In every case the surveyor took account of both primary and secondary influences.

It was discovered, however, that the factors originally responsible for the grouping were often no longer present. In fact, at the time of the study there were 26 cases in which no factors at all were in operation. The localities were mere names and nothing more. In other instances new factors had superseded the ones originally in force. So it was revealed that these groups were not fixed and static social areas, such as one might suppose them to be from a glance at the map.

Of the 121 neighborhoods, 18 seem to have remained substantially unchanged, but all the others had either changed completely or were in the process of increasing or decreasing. Of those classified as "completely changed," 26 were groups only in name. Their social significance had entirely disappeared. The surveyor is careful to note in this connection, however, that "this does not mean that all local consciousness is gone or that the grouping is entirely to no purpose, but it does mean that the strong bonds of religion, sociability, and coöperative effort are focused not locally, but at the general center, Oregon."⁴ Those groups classified as increasing or decreasing are to be thought of as changing not only in *geographic boundaries*, but more particularly in the *vitality and solidarity* of the group itself.

The real significance of these rural areas must not be overlooked. It lies in the fact that they are, for the most part true social unities. By this is meant that there is present a local consciousness of co-

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

hesion. When therefore they are designated as primary groups or neighborhoods, it is to say that they are psychological and social as well as geographic.

Attention should be called also to the existence of rural areas in this county, for about each city or village was found a comparatively uniform space where no vital neighborhoods were discoverable.⁵ In these spaces the focusing of the farm families was toward the urban centers. These centers dominated the social life of the outlying farms. Insofar as distinctly open country neighborhoods were concerned, these were ungrouped areas. Nevertheless, it was apparent that "sometimes a rural consciousness as distinct from the village was found and sometimes, especially with the smaller centers, there seemed to be a blending over until no boundary could be distinguished."⁶

When a trade-zone map of all the village and town centers is superimposed upon the neighborhood map of this county, the open country neighborhoods are all found to be embraced in rural areas, splitting up between them in all sorts of ways. The chief fact to be noted, however, is that such areas do not generally supplant socially the neighborhood groups.

2. A *second* study of open country neighborhoods was made by Professors Dwight Sanderson and Warren S. Thompson in Otsego County, New York.⁷

Employing the method already described, the surveyors produced a map. It "shows 222 locality names used by 3,177 houses; 42 local names used by less than 5 houses each in a total of 171 houses; 43 village centers with 845 farmhouses so near the villages that they used the village name for their locality; and 950 farmhouses outside of areas having any local name; making a total of 5,143 houses shown on the map of the county. . . . The results show that about 62 per cent of the farmhouses are located in areas having locality names, about 16 per cent are so near villages that they use the village name, and about 22 per cent have no local name

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁷ See "The Social Areas of Otsego County," *Bulletin No. 422*, Agricultural Experiment Station, Cornell University, July, 1923.

or use a local name which is common to only three or four houses.”⁸ Further analysis shows that the average number of families to the neighborhood was 14 and the average area was $2\frac{3}{4}$ square miles.⁹

The names of the neighborhoods had various origins, such as, those of prominent persons or families of first settlers; natural phenomena, as creeks, lakes, hills, and valleys; nationalities, churches, school districts, mills, and post offices; while several names were of unknown derivation. One outstanding source of names was families of early settlers and prominent persons. The most important source was the school district.

The names in many cases clearly indicate the factors giving identity to the neighborhood. The chief factors in the order of their importance were assigned by the people themselves as follows: school, kinship, hills, valleys, isolation, church, grange, roads, and farmer's nationality.¹⁰

In seeking to determine the nature of rural neighborhoods, the investigators went back of the names and the areas to find the psychological and sociological realities. They endeavored to establish some criterion by which to judge. In his Wisconsin study, Kolb had described the rural neighborhood as “that first grouping beyond the family which has social significance and which is conscious of some local unity.”¹¹ Others had described it as “a geographic group of farm families having some distinct local social cohesion.”¹² The facts discovered in Otsego County seemed to call for a more exact description, because the investigators found cases where only a half-dozen families were using the same locality name. There was doubt whether groupings so small, even tho local cohesion and unity prevailed, should be called neighborhoods. It seemed pertinent to raise the question whether a certain degree of consciousness of local unity and cohesion was not necessary in order for a primary local group to qualify as a neighborhood. Hence, two criteria were proposed for distinguishing neighborhood areas. The first was “the amount of neighborliness and the degree to which it was common

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 10.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹¹ Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

¹² *Proceedings First National Country Life Conference*, p. 128, 1920.

to the whole group"; the second was the common activities of the group.¹³

To find how far these forces were present, several questions were submitted to the families involved. One was concerning the activities in which the neighborhood joined. The following were reported: farm work, church, Sunday school, school, socials and home parties, dancing, Dairymen's League, Grange, farm and home bureau, and others of a miscellaneous nature. In 38 cases there were no activities. Another question asked was whether the people got together in any way at their homes. About half the neighborhoods reported that they foregathered in house parties, socials, ladies' aids, family gatherings, church work, dances, home economics clubs, and husking bees. To the question whether the people of the neighborhood did any visiting among themselves, 57 affirmative answers were received, while 75 stated they visited only a little. A fourth question was whether the men helped one another in farm work. All but a dozen reported they did. The types of work mentioned in order of frequency were as follows: threshing, silo-filling, haying, harvesting, cutting corn, cutting wood, drawing milk, exchanging tools, butchering, planting, digging potatoes, cutting ice, shoveling snow on the roads.¹⁴

In the light of this knowledge, supplemented by a detailed study of several localities, the authors classified the neighborhoods under seven types, the most important factors responsible for the local bond of unity serving as the basis. The types are: (1) The *hamlet* is described as a group of houses close together and usually associated with some institution or business. (2) The *institutional neighborhood* is described as a cluster of families tributary to one or more institutions, such as school, grange, or church. (3) The *business neighborhood* is described as a group of families tributary to a mill, creamery, store, railway station, or some industrial plant. (4) The *ethnic neighborhood* is described as a group of families of a common alien race. (5) The *kinship neighborhood* is described as a group of families closely related in blood. (6) The *topographic neighborhood* is described as consisting of families whose bond of

¹³ Sanderson and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.

unity is due to some more or less isolated situation, such as a valley or hill. Often, however, such localities are only geographic and not social areas. (7) The *village neighborhood* is described as a group of farm families so near a village that the village name is used for the locality. Such neighborhoods are so closely identified with the village group proper that they can hardly be called separate units.¹⁵ It is recognized that these seven types are not entirely distinct and separate. Some overlapping is evident, the hamlet being practically always an institutional type often determined by the ethnic or topographic factors also.¹⁶

The New York county was much like the one in Wisconsin as regards change in neighborhoods. The business neighborhood, originally determined by mills, blacksmith shops, cheese factories, etc., was practically a thing of the past as a social unit. The kinship neighborhood was fast disappearing.¹⁷ Where topography was the only factor in creating community, little of significance remained. Institutional neighborhoods were the most permanent. Where they were isolated by distance or topography from village centers, they were subject to the least change and were found at their best. Such neighborhoods had a larger area and population than the average of the county. Their area ranged from 5 to 10 sq. miles, and the number of families from 25 to 50. In other words, they were from two to four times the size of the ordinary neighborhoods. In fact, of the total number of neighborhoods in the country, only 20 to 25 could be said to be going concerns or functioning social areas; and all these were of the institutional type. The authors of the Survey therefore conclude that the rural neighborhood in this county "is ceasing to function as a social unit except where its life is centered in some local institution."¹⁸

Altho the neighborhood is passing, a certain amount of neighborliness among farmers dwelling near together still remains. Yet in some cases neighborliness was found actually to have decreased when this county was resurveyed in 1930. Attachment to agencies outside the locality had weakened it. Only in isolated sections is it

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27.

likely to retain its old-time vigor.¹⁹ Even where people are permanent residents and farming is the only occupation, the neighborhood and neighborliness are on the wane.

Since the institutional neighborhoods are the only ones of real social significance in this county, it will be profitable to give a more detailed account of one of them. The authors' description of Pierstown may be reproduced by way of illustration:

"Pierstown is about six miles north of Cooperstown, where most of its business is done and which is its natural community center. It is slightly farther from Richfield Springs. It includes about 36 families and approximately 150 persons, almost all of American stock, scattered over an area extending halfway to Cooperstown on the south, and from a mile and a half to two miles west and northwest of the school. It is bounded by hills on the north and west and by Otsego Lake on the east. At the neighborhood center there is a good district school, but the chief neighborhood activities center in the Grange hall. The Grange has a membership of about 100. It has a good building, equipped with a kitchen, a dining-room, and a hall, with a stage, which seats about 200. A small grocery store is kept in the basement. The regular meeting of the Grange is held here every fortnight, a Sunday school is held every Sunday, and preaching services are conducted once a month or oftener. Also, the young people hold half a dozen dances during the year, the Grange has an annual dance, and socials and suppers are frequent. The farm and home bureaus, the Dairymen's League, and the ladies' aid society, also hold their meetings here. At Christmas the Grange, the Sunday school, and the three district schools coöperate in an entertainment which is attended by the whole neighborhood. For all of these occasions the Grange furnishes the hall, with heat and light, free of charge, so that it is a real social center. The Grange has a good degree team, and the lecturers' hour furnishes good programs in which the members have been trained to participate.

¹⁹ Sanderson and Dorn, "The Rural Neighborhoods of Otsego County, New York, 1931," *Mimeographed Bulletin No. 2*, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, March, 1932.

The Grange has also taken an active interest in making an attractive Grange exhibit at the county fair, and its members are interested in raising farm and garden products, in canning fruits and vegetables, and in raising flowers, for this exhibit. The people have been encouraged to take part in these neighborhood activities, so that each expects to do his share. The home bureau has brought the women together more closely in specific occupational interests."

It is pertinent to ask why the rural neighborhood as a social unit is disappearing. The main reason assigned is that these areas are being absorbed by the larger community. This means that the social interests of the people are focusing upon the village centers; that rural areas are superseding the distinctly rural areas.²⁰ Back of this change lies, of course, the development of good roads and new means of communication and locomotion.

Rural areas, as well as neighborhoods, in Otsego County were likewise investigated. The boundaries of these areas were determined from data furnished by the farm families, showing to what extent each village or town served them as a trading and social center. Including one city having about 12,000 population, the county had 43 rural areas. The centers were generally small villages, ranging from 70 people to 2,700. Only three numbered as many as 1,000 people. The size of the area tended to vary directly with the size of the village center. The average farm population to the area was 416, but in this some were included who properly belonged to rural areas whose centers lay beyond the county boundaries. When proper allowance was made for such families, the average farm population per area was practically the same as that of the village centers.²¹

The surveyors emphasized that these areas "are the natural social areas, whose institutions bind the people together into locality groups." ²² Owing to the topography of the county, the villages were numerous and the areas small. This probably accounts for the extensive focalization of farm life upon the villages.

3. A third study of rural areas was made by Professors E. L.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-31.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

Morgan and Owen Howells in Boone County, Missouri.²³ By methods similar to those already described, the rural areas were determined as they appear on the accompanying map.

Fifty-nine neighborhoods, bearing locality names, were found. The names originated from sources much like those in Wisconsin and New York. However, the range of sources is decidedly more limited.

The factors responsible for whatever "we consciousness" these neighborhoods had, like the sources of names, seem to be somewhat more restricted than was revealed by the other surveys. The authors especially call attention to the absence of ethnic or nationality factors, and also of religious sects with beliefs or habits of such peculiar nature as to be an exclusive group-making force.²⁴ The ethnic homogeneity, however, applied only to the white population, as there were several Negro neighborhoods in addition to the white ones. Institutions are about the only factors now effective in creating neighborhood unity. These embrace the school, church, store, and blacksmith shop.

The authors attempted to measure the degree of local "we consciousness." The measuring stick was "the frequency with which the group came together for any purpose, the readiness with which the group name was accepted and recognized by those living within and without the area, and . . . the frequency with which activities occurred that demanded a conscious recognition of group organization."²⁵ They found the highest degree of "we consciousness" where interest centered in three or four institutions. In several cases an excellent church fostered only a slightly lower degree of group spirit. A lesser degree was found where school district and church and sometimes a store were involved. Only the slightest degree of group unity was manifest where kinship bonds or natural phenomena were the prevailing factors.²⁶

School districts were found to be the most constant and effective social areas. In every way these seemed to be the largest and most

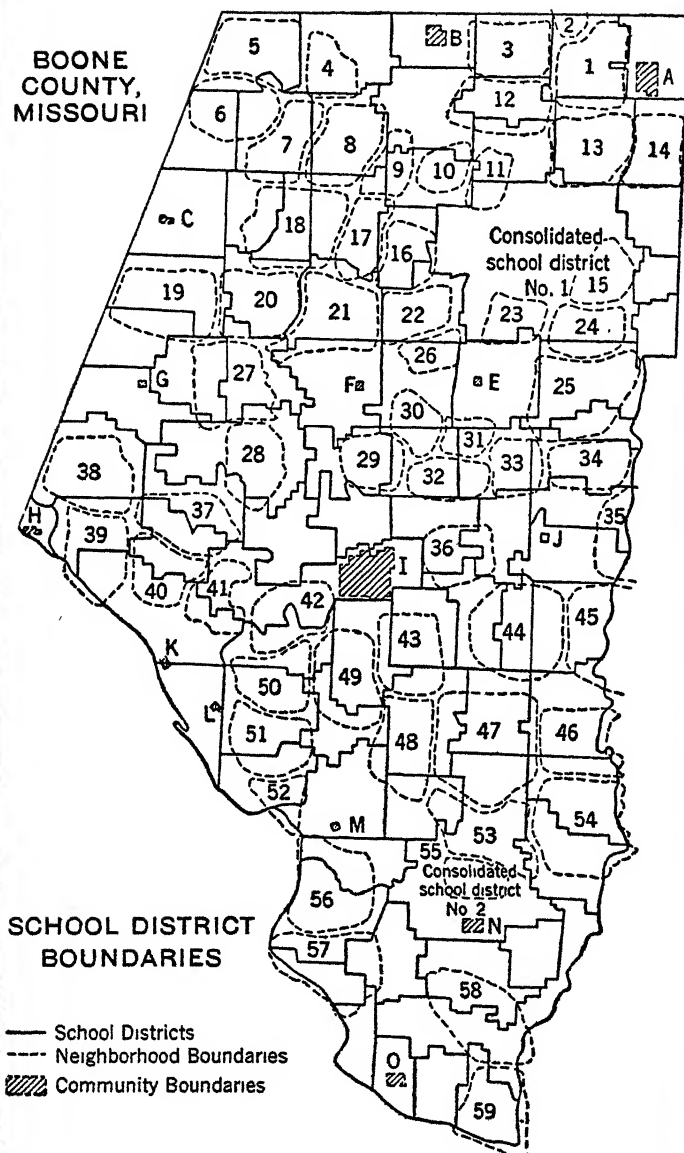
²³ See "Rural Population Groups," *Research Bulletin No. 74*, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., 1925.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

**BOONE
COUNTY,
MISSOURI**



20. School District Boundaries, Boone County, Missouri

Source: "Rural Population Groups," *Research Bulletin No. 74*, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Missouri, 1925, p. 23

dynamic agencies in securing face-to-face contacts. Hence it is pointed out that, whatever other forces are responsible for the primary groups, the school district must be recognized. Thus the primary group association is said to be dual in nature.²⁷ For illustration, the case of the Butler-Simms neighborhood is cited. Here unity derives from the men responsible for a "patriarchal domain," but, at the same time, underlying this is the consciousness of the Barnett school district.²⁸

School districts are supposed to be wholly arbitrary legal units, like townships and counties. But it appears that in this case there has been constant adjustment of the district lines to conform to needs. The districts are, therefore, no longer arbitrary, but natural social unities.²⁹

This Missouri county has 15 rurban areas, the centers of which are indicated on the map by squares and letters. These areas are described as being characterized by secondary group relationships of the primary population groups.³⁰ Stress is laid upon the fact that primary groups in this county, as elsewhere, are split up in the formation of rurban areas. A single primary group may divide its allegiance between two or more secondary groups.³¹ The rurban, or trade center area, is therefore, made up of parts of several neighborhood areas. Individuals show loyalty to a single primary group but at the same time they may be attached to two different towns where they trade, do banking, or send to high school.³² The superior strength of primary group attachment is evinced in the fact that numerous secondary attachments do not disintegrate it.³³

Special mention is made of the consolidated school district as a type of secondary group. It is a relatively new grouping but one gaining in force.

The investigators were impressed with the likenesses between the neighborhood and the secondary group. They say that "the characteristics of each closely parallel the other; that the rurban group is just a super-neighborhood."³⁴ The chief difference between the

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

³³ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

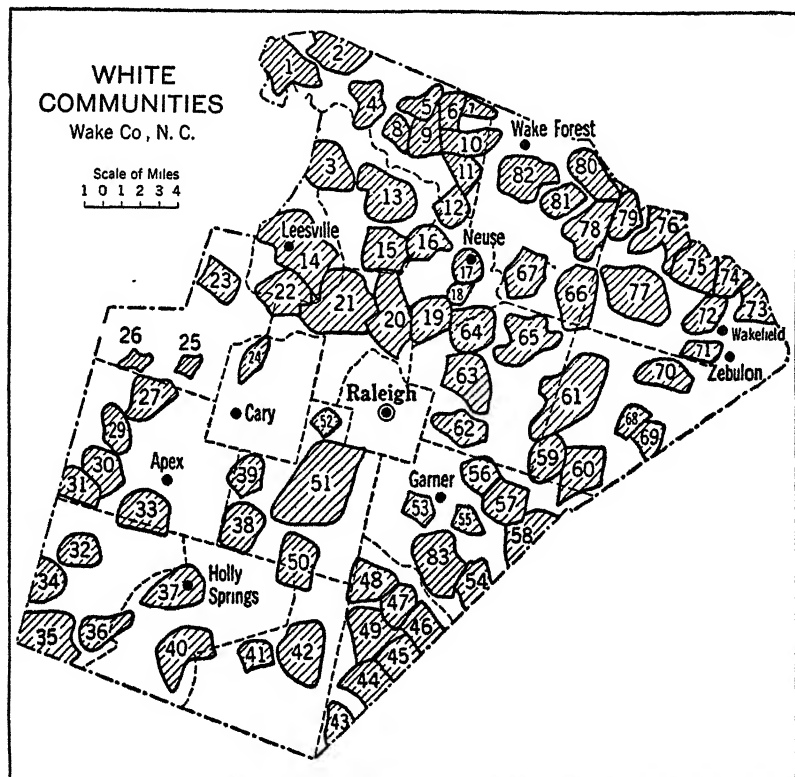
³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 59.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

two is held to be the degree of group consciousness. The primary group, because of intimacy of contact, has a higher degree of group consciousness than the secondary.³⁵ Sharp distinctions between



21. White Communities, Wake County, North Carolina

Source: "Rural Organization," *Bulletin No. 245*, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh, 1922, pp. 8, 9.

groups seem to these authors rather arbitrary. For, as they say: "The phenomena of group life begin with the family and find the individual a part of ever-widening circles, each catering to definite needs in his life. Within each circle he sets up a community of in-

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

terests with the other members thereof, but is always more or less conscious of other circles claiming his loyalty. From neighborhood to world community, the synthesizing of group relations is so perfect that only by fixing upon arbitrary limits can the separate stages of community be delineated.”³⁶

Change is also stressed. The old self-sufficient rural neighborhood is passing. Only a few still remain. Larger social areas are forming. They are seen in consolidated school districts and village- or town-centered groupings.³⁷

4. The fourth study of rural social areas was made in Wake County, North Carolina, by Professors C. C. Zimmerman and C. C. Taylor.³⁸

Here was a county of over 75,000 population in 1919, of which not quite 40,000 were in the open country and the rest in incorporated places. The country population was, roughly, two-fifths colored and three-fifths white. Analyzing the social structure of the rural districts by methods analogous to those already described, the investigators found 83 white and 50 colored geographic areas. These all bore names similar in source to those mentioned in the other surveys. The four chief sources, in the order of their frequency, were as follows: railway stations, villages, some family names, and some natural phenomena.

In between these named areas there was found territory of the nameless sort where presumably no definite neighborhoods existed. In this particular the situation was quite the same as that found elsewhere.

The Wisconsin, New York and Missouri surveys found the rural geographic areas or neighborhoods to be primary social groups. The surveyors of Wake County positively declare that none of the local geographic areas was a sociologic area. Of the neighborhoods deriving their geographic names from institutions, they say: “It is impossible to find any geographic group whose face-to-face relationships are the same. The landlord communes with people of his

³⁶ Morgan and Howells, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

³⁸ See “Rural Organization,” *Bulletin No. 245*, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh, 1922.

same class status and his same standard of living. The tenant nearly always has a community of interest separate from the other classes. Of course, the Negro communes and associates in face-to-face relationship with other Negroes. To say that Cedar Grove, Purnell, Sunrise, or Union Crossroads is a geographic sociological community is to deny the scientific meaning of the word community. This is typical of all other institutional groups which were designated by community names." ³⁹ Of those areas bearing family names, the surveyors say: "To have a geographic sociological community at Jeffries or Litchfords the group giving this as their community would have to be homogeneous in every detail, and, in addition, cover a specific geographic area. There must be only one class of people with one standard of living inhabiting the same area. This is not so. The group or area bearing a family name is often a sociological community, but in no instance in Wake County was it found to be a geographic sociological community. The sociological community exists, but it is not geographically exclusive. The economic and social strata preclude the geographic community." ⁴⁰ In like vein it is declared of the areas where physiographic factors give the name: "They were names of localities which contain numerous communities inhabiting the same area and separated from each other by race, class status, social practices, and standards of conduct." ⁴¹ The whole situation with reference to the neighborhoods is summed up by the surveyors when they say: "It was impossible to find a geographic community in the tangled skein of human relationships." ⁴²

The surveyors of this county found rural primary groups in the sense that families or individuals participate "with different groups of people in different institutions for the satisfaction of different desires." ⁴³ But they found no exclusively geographic primary groups. Eleven types of primary groups of the non-geographic sort are listed, viz.: school, night school, church, Sunday school, Junior Order Lodge, Masonic Lodge, welfare associations, Farmers' Union, credit union, farm loan associations, and neighborhood

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

groups.⁴⁴ By "neighborhood" is meant "a community group of elders or heads of families who visit each other. It is not a geographic neighborhood."⁴⁵

5. A fifth survey, of Whitman County, Washington, by Professors E. A. Taylor and F. R. Yoder followed the same methods and reached substantially the same conclusions as the others.⁴⁶ Nothing would be added to the data already before us by presenting an analysis of this survey; hence a bare reference to it will suffice.

The findings of the five surveys do not fully agree. It is a case of four against one that neighborhoods are true local *social* units. Several explanations of why the results of the North Carolina survey are at variance with the others suggest themselves. First of all, conditions are possibly different. The North Carolina investigators report a degree of social heterogeneity that does not exist in the case of the other states. There was cleavage between the black and white races, and between landlords and tenants. Five classes of people are said to be produced by the kind of farming prevailing in the South. "These are the absentee landlords, the owner-operator who is a landlord, the owner-operator, the tenant, and the cropper. Most often the cropper is a colored man. You find all of these classes except the absentee owner living in the same geographic area at the same time."⁴⁷ This economic and social stratification prevents neighborhoods from being social units. That such stratification is a fact cannot be gainsaid, but whether it precludes social unity to the extent alleged is another question.

Another explanation may be that the difference is chiefly one of interpreting similar data. This indeed seems to be the principal explanation, for the Carolina surveyors started out with a set definition of the primary group, to which they gave a very strict construction.⁴⁸ Moreover, in searching for it in the neighborhood, they did not seem to penetrate beneath the surface for evidences

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33, note.

⁴⁶ "Rural Social Organization in Whitman Co.," by E. A. Taylor and F. R. Yoder, State College of Washington Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No.* 203, June, 1926.

⁴⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

of psychological unities. The chances are that such unities are more prevalent than this survey indicates. On the other hand, it may well be that Southern social stratification does prevent as large a measure of local group consciousness as was revealed in the Wisconsin, New York, Missouri, and Washington neighborhoods. In brief, the real difference between these and the Carolina areas is perhaps only a matter of degree.

The Rural Community Defined

The data furnished by the studies analyzed give materials for formulating a definite notion of what constitutes the rural community. We have seen that the neighborhood is a local geographic area of the open country, usually with a name, in which the inhabitants have more or less frequent face-to-face contacts. We have seen also that it is often more than a mere intimate contact area, for there is exchange of services, or neighborliness. This, in fact, is what gives the idea of neighborhood. As Dr. L. H. Bailey has said: "A neighborhood comprises the region of neighboring."⁴⁹ The neighborhood, however, does not always stop with mere neighboring. It may, and not infrequently does, have common interests and activities which are pursued in group-wise fashion under a definite consciousness of unity. Thus it appears that the rural neighborhood is a variable area of common life; variable in size, in range of group activities and in degree of consciousness of unity. The single room school is generally its central institution. A count of such open country institutions gives some 250,000 neighborhoods.

Is the neighborhood then the rural community? Obviously, we cannot say until we have defined community. But there is no general agreement as to just what community is, i. e., as to what are the indispensable elements constituting it. One has said that it is any "area of common life,"⁵⁰ but others think this is too broad and lacks specific content. So an effort is made to give more definite meaning to the "common life." Thus Dr. R. E. Hieronymus em-

⁴⁹ L. H. Bailey, *York State Rural Problems*, Vol. II, p. 27.

⁵⁰ R. M. MacIver, *Community*, p. 22.



22. Neighborhood Areas, Southeastern Whitman County, Washington

Source: "Rural Social Organization in Whitman Co.," by E. A. Taylor and F. R. Yoder, State College of Washington Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 203*, June, 1926, p. 14.

phasizes acting "together in the *chief concerns* of life."⁵¹ Butterfield stresses the factor of group *self-sufficiency*. He says that the community must be "big enough to have its own centers of interest—its trading center, its social center, its own church, its own schoolhouse, its own Grange, its own library, and to possess such other institutions as the people of the community need. . . . A community is the smallest social unit that will hold together. Theoretically a community could live unto itself; tho that would be actually impossible; just as it is impossible for an individual to live really a hermit."⁵² D. H. Kulp says the neighborhood is the area beyond the kinship group where control of personal wishes is most effective and the community is the series of group relationships thru which the expression of personal wishes is most nearly adequate.⁵³ Gillette thinks that there must be an established *home*, or *center of common interests* and coöperation.⁵⁴ Sanderson says, "A rural community consists of the social interaction of the people and their institutions in the local area in which they live on dispersed farmsteads and in a hamlet or village which forms the center of their common activities."⁵⁵

Professors Morgan and Howells find the peculiarities of community in the *complexity* of secondary grouping. It occurs where primary groups are meeting the more complex needs in common.⁵⁶ Galpin sees the rural community marked by the fact of grouping about urban centers that render more or less complete social service to the farmers.⁵⁷

Despite the lack of agreement over the essentials of community, there is a growing tendency among sociologists to restrict the term, "rural community," to the larger areas in which all or most of the major human interests are satisfied.

⁵¹ See "Locating the Rural Community," by Dwight Sanderson, *The Cornell Reading Course for the Farm*, June, 1920, p. 415.

⁵² "Mobilizing the Rural Community," by E. L. Morgan, *Extension Bulletin No. 23*, Introduction, p. 9, Massachusetts Agricultural College, 1918.

⁵³ D. H. Kulp, *Country Life in South China*, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1925, p. XXX.

⁵⁴ J. M. Gillette, *Rural Sociology*, p. 547.

⁵⁵ Dwight Sanderson, *The Rural Community*, Ginn and Co., 1932, p. 481.

⁵⁶ Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

⁵⁷ Galpin, *op. cit.*

Reverting then to the question whether the rural neighborhood is a community or not, the answer must therefore be that all depends upon the neighborhood. Some, indeed, have all the requisites of common life that certain writers insist the community must possess, i. e., a center of common interest and organization, relative self-sufficiency in meeting the fundamental needs of life, and group consciousness. Such neighborhoods apparently meet the requirements laid down for the rural community. On the other hand, many neighborhoods do not adequately qualify, and it is a question whether they should be called communities.

Some sociologists have insisted upon drawing sharp distinctions between neighborhood and community. Thus Butterfield has said: "I wish to emphasize one point very strongly. We must not confuse a 'community' with a 'neighborhood.' A neighborhood is simply a group of families living conveniently near together. The neighborhood can do a great many things, but it is not a community. A true community is a social group that is more or less self-sufficing."⁵⁸

Dr. L. H. Bailey also has made a careful distinction. He says: "A neighborhood comprises the region of neighboring. It is personal. The community represents commonality of interests rather than friendship of folks. I want the community to develop, and to have a better church and school and Grange and library; but within the community there may be several neighborhoods, and it is important that the neighborhood activities be not forgotten or overlooked in our grasp for bigger things. A community cannot accomplish much if the neighborhoods are dead or if they are torn by petty dissensions."⁵⁹

In reality no such sharp distinctions exist as these writers would make. Their distinctions are without significant difference. Sociologists are coming to see this. Thus Professor Sanderson does well to say: "It must be confessed that no sharp distinction can be drawn, for, as in all classifications of the phenomena of life, no absolute

⁵⁸ See "Mobilizing the Rural Community," by E. L. Morgan, *Extension Bulletin No. 23*, Introduction, p. 9, Massachusetts Agricultural College, 1918.

⁵⁹ L. H. Bailey, *op. cit.*

differences exist. In general, the neighborhood has but one or two institutions, or renders but one or two, or at most three, forms of service (such as educational, economic, religious, or social) to its people; whereas the community center usually furnishes most of the services commonly enjoyed by rural people, and is more nearly self-sufficient. However, certain areas which seem to have more of the characteristics of a community than of a neighborhood may furnish but two or three forms of service, and it therefore seems difficult to distinguish communities from neighborhoods by the number of interests satisfied by the local institutions. The only principle for the distinction of *neighborhood* and *community* which we have been able to recognize, is that more of the interests of the people in a neighborhood are satisfied by the institutions and life of the community than by the neighborhood.”⁶⁰

To the same effect Morgan and Howells say: “From neighborhood to world community the synthesizing of group relations is so perfect that only by fixing upon arbitrary limits can the separate stages of community be delineated.”⁶¹

Nevertheless, for convenience and more or less arbitrarily, sociologists are coming to confine the term rural community to the rural areas or at most to such areas as are unified by institutions that minister to the chief needs of country people. In like manner, the term neighborhood is being reserved for the smaller areas where personal contacts prevail and revolve about only one or two interests.

The Changing Rural Structure

It must have become clear that rural social structure is undergoing change. Both the neighborhood and the community are involved. Primary groups were modal to the horse and buggy age. Social life was then highly personal and local, and rural society had a pretty definite territorial basis. Contacts were largely limited to and generally inclusive of all within a narrow area, that of the team-haul, which was a territory of some three or four square miles

⁶⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

in extent. That area was called the neighborhood. It was the farmers' community.

The self-sufficient agriculture gave rise to but few interests that took the farmer outside the neighborhood. His wants were satisfied at home on his farm by the efforts of his household and by the occasional pooling of the activities of near-by farmers.

Needless to say, that age has past. An industrial and mechanical civilization has outmoded it. A commercial, dependent, and, of late, a government-controlled agriculture has superseded an independent and self-sufficient farm economy. No farmer is now able to supply his wants, and no neighborhood is now communally adequate. It has ceased to be an area of economic and social sufficiency. The countryman must move in a wider sphere. Thus the rural structure has taken on new form and meaning. The community tends to become the trading center and its adjacent territory, the area of the auto-run, some seven or eight times the size of the old team-haul neighborhood.

The forces that have swung the farmer into a wider orbit have frequently thinned out the population, rendered agriculture economically uncertain, increased tenantry, and weakened local institutions or transferred them to centers outside the locality. Local communal life organized in school, church, and other activities has been curtailed. At the same time, new and broader specialized interests have developed to form the basis of associations. The result is the frequent dissolution and disappearance of the old locality social grouping.

The special interest, functional, impersonal, selective or secondary grouping is more characteristic of urban than of rural life. Rural society is manifestly taking on the urban pattern. How far it will go in this direction, cannot be foreseen, but it is hardly conceivable that neighborhood association will be entirely effaced. As C. C. Zimmerman has well said, "both the localistic and cosmopolitan phases of life and action seem essential to community." Neither type is likely to dominate completely. Therefore what we are witnessing may be chiefly the addition of new interests to the old communal structure, rather than the substitution of a wholly different

framework.⁶² So long as the need for personal contacts and primary group relations remains, some form of local organization probably will continue. However, some think that a conscious effort will have to be made to preserve association in the local neighborhood against the disintegrating influences of Federal and other agencies. Professor Lowry Nelson suggests that commercialized agriculture will have to be limited, self-sufficient farming stimulated, mechanization discouraged, mobility reduced, land tenure stabilized, local political autonomy maintained, and interfamily and neighborhood relations built up thru cultural arts and leisure-time activities if the disintegrating forces are to be curbed.⁶³

The specialized interests and widening contacts and activities of farmers all revolve about trade centers. To them rural institutions are gravitating. Here are located the hospital, the library, fraternal orders, amusement places, creameries, clubs, and coöperative associations. Here also are found the farm loan, insurance, and credit associations, the offices of the Farm Bureau and the Extension Service, as well as business enterprises indispensable to modern agriculture. Finally, converging upon the trade center or radiating from it, as the case may be, are milk routes, mail routes, school routes, telephone and electric lines, and various other functional activities linking farms and neighborhoods with the service center. Thus have town-country areas developed. The integration of some is sufficient to make them true units of association. Others are in process. All over America the framework of the trade center community is emerging.

In the past, institutions often played a major rôle in determining the rural community. Areas became institutionalized and relatively fixed social units. In New England it was the church about which the village settlement and the life of the town turned. In the open country of the Middle West, however, the influence of institutions was not so pronounced. Schools and churches were numerous and scattered at random thruout the country. Neverthe-

⁶² C. C. Zimmerman, *The Changing Community*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1938, p. 73.

⁶³ Lowry Nelson, "Action Programs for the Conservation of Rural Life and Culture," *Rural Sociology*, Dec. 1939, pp. 427-428.

less, they often operated to define communal areas. In the villages of this region the store was the distinctive institution creating a trading area. Today, with the village centering process, the institution exercising the greatest influence in defining and fixing the community boundaries seems to be the consolidated school and the high school.⁶⁴ Thus the new areas are in process of being institutionalized.

The expanding association of the present-day farmer is not, of course, confined to the new town-country area; it reaches beyond to county and state organizations. With increasing frequency there is participation in the activities and interest groups of these greater areas. However, this fact does not suggest that a still wider geographical basis for rural community is in the making.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Is community geographic or a corporate state of mind or both? If both, how is the one related to the other in open country isolated farmstead areas, where the community is known as the neighborhood?
2. What fundamental forces are causing the integration of rural social life in village trading centers?

3. Compare the characteristics of the open country community with those of the rural community and note the essential differences.

4. To what extent, if any, are villagers, farmers, and urbanites distinguished from each other by definite behavior traits?

5. To what extent have local institutions and organizations in an open country neighborhood with which you are familiar declined or become village centered and how has the social life been affected by the change?

6. Are primary groups and their socializing effects growing less or more influential under the village centering trends?

7. What value has the local community to the general social order?

THE COUNTRY VILLAGE

A Distinct Type

RURAL America has numerous small population aggregates known as villages or "towns." Altho bearing some resemblance to the historic agricultural village, they differ from it essentially. They are in fact a distinct type, not peculiarly American, for their counterparts are found elsewhere, but of a place and importance in our rural society that is unique in the realm of country life at large.

They differ from the ancient village in that they are not essentially agricultural. They have other interests and functions. They differ also in numerous ways from urban groups, as we shall see farther on. Still more do they differ from open country neighborhoods, not merely because there is aggregation on the one hand and dispersion on the other, nor because the one is given to agriculture and the other to something else, but for several less obvious reasons. It will become clear as we proceed that these communities are neither strictly country nor city. There are good grounds for calling them either rural or urban. Perhaps the term "Rurban," which has been given a somewhat different application, would be the best.¹ However, they belong to the rural category, to which popular usage and the census classification have assigned them. For from the structural viewpoint, villages are *simple establishments*. This means they are unitary, not *compound establishments*, i. e. aggregations of many groups prevaillingly secondary, after the manner of urban associations. Hence for this reason, if for no others, the village would seem to be essentially rural.

¹ N. L. Sims, *The Rural Community; Ancient and Modern*, pp. 136-137.

Origin of Country Villages

European towns were walled or fortified cities. In origin they did not differ from villages. In the beginning, their permanent inhabitants followed farming and cattle-raising, had common fields, and lived as all villagers did. Then certain villages were made into strongholds to serve as places of refuge and shelter for the inhabitants of the unprotected places. Thus the town was created.²

How different the origin of our country towns! Few of them, except perhaps in New England, ever were agricultural communities, or for other purposes have evolved from one kind of aggregate to another. They are as a rule what they originally set out to be, that is, business centers. They sprang from various activities—a saw-mill or grist-mill, a general store, a station on a railway with grain elevator or stock pens, a river ford, a wayside inn, or a county seat. A considerable number owe their origin to the location of sawmills or grist-mills when the country was being first settled. Many started from shipping points for grain or live stock on railways, others had their genesis in the establishment of the offices of county government. A typical instance of the latter is found in Aton, a town studied by the writer. This village got its start in the thirties of the last century. Two men entered a section of land on the northern frontier of Indiana. They then proceeded to have a county government organized, and secured the location of its seat on their land. A townsite was plotted, a courthouse and jail were built, and soon a store, a blacksmith shop, and a grist-mill arose. Thus a village sprang up in response to conditions created by the transaction of political business.³

A village often frequented by the writer grew up about a saw-and grist-mill combined, located on a small stream, in the vicinity of which a few pioneers had taken up land. Presently a small general store was started by the miller. Then followed a blacksmith shop. There was presently a school. A half-dozen families connected with these activities were soon congregated on this spot and formed

² Carl Bücher, *Industrial Evolution*, translated by Wickett, p. 116.

³ N. L. Sims, *A Hoosier Village*, pp. 21-22.

the nucleus of a village. It was not long before an inn was built and then a church. In this manner began a community that grew into a flourishing hamlet and eventually into a little town. Instances of villages rising along railways are familiar. The founding of one on a newly built line across Iowa may be cited. A water tank was erected by the railroad, then a siding with stock pens. Soon an enterprising farmer had forty acres laid out into town lots and started a store. An elevator and lumber yard quickly followed. Families began to buy lots and build houses, and a boom town was under way. Within a very few years it became a good trading point with a bank and all the service agencies and institutions usual in a little town of a thousand population.

Numerical Importance of Country Villages

Villages number about 19,000, ranging in population from 250 to 2,500. Of these in 1930, 10,661 were incorporated. This left 8,339 unincorporated which, added to 23,564 hamlets of less than 250 population listed in the Rand-McNally Atlas for 1921, gives 31,803 unincorporated places. Thus the total number of villages is approximately 42,464. The majority of all villages, perhaps even three-fourths, are farm trade centers rather than industrial communities.⁴

There is a fairly close correlation between the number of villages and the population density. This variation ranges from 0.15 villages in every 100 square miles of territory where the density is less than ten persons per square mile, to 3.29 villages per 100 square miles of territory where the density is seventy persons or more per square mile.⁵

The number of villages in proportion to the rural population is another matter. There is no such uniform correlation as with the general population. The Middle Atlantic states, for instance, have a high and the Southern states a low ratio between the two factors. Anywhere from 27 to 39 per cent of the rural population in all

⁴ Brunner & Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 20.

⁵ C. Luther Fry, *American Villagers*, p. 34.

parts of the country except New England and the South lives in villages. In the three Southern divisions the range is from 13 to 20 per cent only.⁶ There are striking differences between states with rural populations that are fairly comparable. Counting incorporated towns up to 5,000 population, Illinois in 1930 had 1,015 such places and Mississippi but 296; Iowa had 882, to 190 for Louisiana.

Leaving New England and the South out, nearly one out of three rural people is a villager. In the South it is one in every six. The average for the country, omitting New England, is one in four. New England has to be left out because census data for that section are not comparable with those for other sections. However, to one familiar with New England it is evident that the ratio of villagers to rural dwellers is very high. Probably the village part of the rural population has increased generally thruout the country since 1930.

The sectional difference in the number of villages requires explanation. Douglass in *The Little Town* advances three major reasons to account for it. They are *agricultural prosperity*, *physiography*, and *habit*. Under *the first* he argues that villages will be most numerous in regions of highest land values, largest improved areas, greatest value of products per acre, and most extensive farm improvement. Similarly, they will be fewest where conditions are the reverse. Thus he holds villages are a sort of luxury of prosperous farmers. The differences between the north and south Mississippi Valley illustrate this.

Of much less importance is the *second factor, physiography*. The prevalence of mountains or plains, and the water supply have influenced grouping. The Piedmont lands of North Carolina led to small farming and relatively numerous villages, in contrast to South Carolina, with its wide plains conducing to the plantation system, which fosters few villages. Again, in the arid West, where irrigation is necessary, agriculture becomes intensive and settlements compact.

Habit, the third factor, is explained as the social custom of set-

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

tlers. Those migrating from the South to Kansas, Missouri, Indiana, and Ohio, not being accustomed to towns, established few. Those coming from New England into Iowa and Illinois, brought their town habits along.

Are Country Villages Growing or Declining?

The proportion of the total rural population resident in villages grows apace. It jumped from 35.6 per cent in 1910 to 44 per cent in 1930. During 1920-1930 the population of unincorporated villages increased 30.7 per cent, and that of incorporated villages 2.4 per cent. The rapid growth of unincorporated village population was a phase of urbanization, for such villages are heavily concentrated in the areas of conurbation. A second factor was the rise of numerous camps, service stations, and other clusters of people engaged in trade along the arterial highway; and a third was an increasing development of recreational and resorting places pretty generally thruout the nation.

Not all classes of villages grow alike, and whether the general tendency is or is not to grow has been a disputed question. Brunner and Kolb concluded from a study of the problem that from 1900 to 1930 for every seven villages that lost 20 per cent or more in population there were thirty that increased that much or more.⁷ From 1900 to 1920 about two-fifths of them made but little change, and in the decade 1920-1930 two-thirds of the small ones and over half the others experienced no marked alteration in population.⁸

From a study of changes during the forty years preceding 1930, Gillette concluded that while the population of villages as a class had increased, a large per cent, especially of the smaller ones, had decreased in size.⁹ His conclusions are supported by those of Paul H. Landis, who found that the total number of villages under 2,500 population had decreased between 1900 and 1930 from 73,882 to 56,575, while those above 2,500 had increased from 1,801 to

⁷ Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill, 1933, p. 76.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁹ J. M. Gillette, *Rural Sociology*, The Macmillan Co., pp. 578, 582.

3,165. The hamlets under 250 dropped from 58,403 in 1900 to 37,203 in 1930.¹⁰

The truth of the matter appears to be that with a general increase of village population, the larger trading centers have grown while the smaller ones have tended to decline. The explanation of this is found in basic changes causing relations between the farmer and his trade centers and between trade centers themselves to be re-adjusted. The transportation revolution has widened and multiplied the farmer's village contacts, and his material standard of living has been raised; so more efficient and diversified markets are stimulated. Therefore the sizeable centers, supplying the needs, have grown, and the smaller ones, failing to do so, have lost out in the competitive struggle for patronage.

Urban competition has also worked against the growth and continuance of many small villages by destroying local industries, or where natural resources, such as timber and minerals, have been exhausted, by causing them to relocate. The villages that had grown up about such enterprises have often disappeared. While some new activities have given rise to new aggregates, the gains rarely offset the losses.

It should not be inferred from what has been said that the small local trade center will eventually disappear altogether, for it apparently has a place in rural organization. In the functional differentiation of farmers' villages and towns, its place is becoming more clearly defined as the provider of a near-by shipping point and the goods and services of every day need for the farms. Because of nearness to the farms, it has the advantage over the larger and more remote centers in the shipping and the distribution of staple and heavy goods.¹¹ Moreover, it is in many cases becoming the school center of the farm district. Thus small villages are not likely to vanish from the rural scene.

Is there a law of growth for villages? The author of *The Little*

¹⁰ C. C. Zimmerman, *The Changing Community*, Harper and Brothers, 1938, p. 33. The various studies do not agree as to the number of villages, which may explain why their conclusions differ.

¹¹ Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

Town suggests that the growth of cities is "as rapid and limitless as the multiplication of human desires," while little towns "cannot possibly grow faster than the rural population."¹² Likewise, it may be added, the size of the farm population determines the number of village centers an agricultural area can support unless non-agricultural industries are present. Since the total village population of America has increased and the number of villages has declined *pari passu* with a farm population that has increased but little, if at all, it is evident that factors other than the number of farmers must be determining the trend of village development.

Salient Characteristics of Country Villages

1. *Incorporation* is one characteristic of the larger aggregates—most of those under 2,500—which the census classifies as rural, and those of 2,500 or more population, classified as urban. However, of all aggregates of population from 50 to 2,500, of which there were over 56,000 in 1930, only 13,433 were incorporated. Of these, 10,661 had less than 1,000 population, and 3,087 from 1,000 to 2,500 inhabitants. When, therefore, we characterize rural villages as incorporated, we mean especially the chief trade centers of the country.

Local government was originally a village matter. It is still that in New England. When, however, government was established over the other sections of America, a new mode was generally invented, i. e., local government without regard to villages. The county was the chief unit. Where the township also was created, as in many states settled by New England emigrants, it was a local unit of government for a territory, regardless of village groups. The territory was first and not the village, as originally in New England. The village was thus left without power to do a number of things that compact communities need to do. By incorporation it could get this power. Hence many resorted to the device and became independent of the open country.

¹² Douglass, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

Incorporation confers municipal powers, involving privileges and prerogatives denied the open country. In this respect the village becomes allied with urban interests and has tended until of late to identify itself with them in dominating and exploiting the farming class. Except in this particular, the incorporated may not differ from the unincorporated village.

2. The *composition* of villages differs from that of both the open country and the city. A study of 177 typical villages made by the Institute of Social and Religious Research disclosed the fact that villages tend to reflect the general population conditions prevailing in the section where they exist. In villages of the West there is a preponderance of men and relatively few unmarried women. In those of the South is found a fairly normal age and sex distribution and a large Negro population. In those of the Middle West a great mixture of nationalities obtains. In the East villages have a great excess of women and aged people and a high percentage of married men.¹³

Compared with middle-sized cities in the same areas, everywhere villages have a larger percentage of native white stock and of old men and women in their populations. This means that village groups are both more homogeneous and conservative than cities.¹⁴

Significant differences between open country people and villagers also appear. The open country always shows a far higher ratio of males to females than do villages. The villages, on the other hand, show a far larger number of old people and fewer children. They also have fewer married people fifteen years of age and over, and a great excess of widowed.¹⁵ These generalizations hold only for agricultural villages. The distinctly industrial villages show more males than females, more children than either cities or farms, and more married and fewer old people than agricultural villages.¹⁶

It has been suggested that the composition of the village in respect to age grouping, ethnic make-up, and the ratio of children to women tends to be that to which farm and city alike are gravitat-

¹³ Fry, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-68.

¹⁴ Fry, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 101-104.

¹⁶ Brunner, *Industrial Village Churches*, Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1930, pp. 13-21, 175-176.

ing.¹⁷ If this tendency actually exists, it signifies only the growing homogeneity of the nation's population composition.

3. The *occupations* pursued by villagers are a third characteristic. A restudy of the 177 villages by the President's Committee on Social Trends in 1930 revealed the fact that about three-fourths of the males and over one-fifth of the females over ten years of age were gainfully employed. (1) Everywhere the largest group was in *manufacturing*. It included over a third of the males and about 15 per cent of the females. (2) *Trade* was the second in importance, embracing about one-fifth of the males and 10 per cent of the females. It ranked fourth for the latter. (3) *Agriculture* and *transportation* were rivals for third place among the men. In the South and Far West the former led, while in the Middle Atlantic and the Middle West the latter took precedence. These pursuits ranked sixth with the women. (4) The fourth place fell to *professional service*, which claimed between 6 and 7 per cent of the men and over one-fifth of the women. For the latter it took second rank. (5) The fifth occupation was *domestic and personal service*, which had 5 per cent of the men and 37 per cent of the women. Naturally this was the pursuit of first rank among women.¹⁸

One surprising thing is the few villagers in agriculture. Another is the preponderance of manufacturing over trade altho villages are the trading centers for the country. The greatest variation is in the numbers in agriculture, not only as between the four great areas, but as between villages within the same areas as well.¹⁹

A notion is abroad that many retired farmers and absentee landlord farmers dwell in villages. If so, they are not an active element of the villages. In this respect country villages have departed widely from the Colonial type. Studies of New England villages made by the writer show that agriculture still preponderates. Much the same thing would be found in Utah villages, and to some extent in those of the irrigated regions of other Far Western states.

By using Alba M. Edwards' "social economic" classification of

¹⁷ Kolb, J. H. and E. de S. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1935, p. 85.

¹⁸ Fry, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-79.

¹⁹ Fry, *ibid.*

workers, more light on village pursuits can be obtained. He divides the gainfully employed into eight classes. They are: proprietors, officials and managers; clerks; skilled workers; semi-skilled workers; laborers; servants; public officials; and professional persons. Measured by these categories, the largest group of village males in all areas is that of laborers, it being from 28 to 31 per cent. The next class is proprietors, officials and managers, ranging from 18 to about 25 per cent. The third is skilled workers, which includes from 14 to 19 per cent. The fourth is clerks, which has from 9 to 14 per cent. The fifth is semi-skilled workers, to which belong from about 8 to over 16 per cent of the employed. Among women there is far greater variation. In the Middle Atlantic region semi-skilled workers lead, followed by clerks, then servants, then professional people, with proprietors taking fifth place. In the Middle West and Far West clerks are the largest group, followed by professional persons. In the Middle West servants take third place, proprietors fourth, and semi-skilled workers fifth. In the Far West proprietors have third place and servants fourth, with semi-skilled workers in the fifth rank. In the South servants hold first place, clerks second, professional persons third, and proprietors fourth, with semi-skilled workers and laborers close rivals for the fifth rank.²⁰

In a comparison as to occupations, the agricultural class is proportionately larger and the manufacturing class smaller in villages than in cities. The villages have a relatively high percentage in professional service, but a much lower one in clerical occupations. The proportion engaged in trade is about the same in villages and cities.²¹

More fruitful is the comparison of villages and cities as to social-economic status. In villages of all sections the percentage of male proprietors is at least 70 per cent greater than in the cities. Laborers also are more numerous, but clerks and semi-skilled workers are less numerous. Women proprietors are likewise relatively more numerous in villages than in cities, as are servants also. It is otherwise, however, with clerks and semi-skilled workers.²²

Altho larger villages and cities are much alike in the kinds of

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-87.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 95.

occupations that prevail, they differ widely in the social-economic status of the employed. In villages, as in the open country, independent proprietors flourish. The occupational similarity of the larger villages to the larger cities sets them apart from the open country. The degree of separateness depends upon the extent to which the village has attained what Zimmerman calls *cosmopolitan* in contrast to *localistic* characteristics. Whether it is chiefly one or the other depends on (1) how many of its inhabitants are engaged in non-agricultural pursuits; (2) the number of commercial units; and (3), most important of all, on whether or not there are communication and banking facilities present.²³

But what differentiates even more is the fact that villagers are consumers of food and farmers are producers. Conflict inevitably rises out of this situation.

4. *Leadership in villages*, compared with cities, is reflected in the relative number of professional persons. Villages have a larger proportion of teachers, clergymen, physicians, and, at least in county seats, lawyers than have the cities. Generally, outside of these professions, however, they have a relatively low proportion of professional persons.

A study made of the professional and trades people in the rural trade centers of Wayne County, New York, revealed the average number for hamlets of less than 100 to be 0.6; for villages of 100 to 499, only 3; for villages of 500 to 999, 10; and for towns of 1,000 to 2,499, 23. In all classes of villages except the last, clergymen were the most numerous, with doctors and barbers second.²⁴

In other words, within a limited range, villages are rich, but beyond this poor, in men and women of the learned professions.²⁵ Being thus proportionally well supplied in number, if not in variety, of potential leaders, villages ought to be efficiently organized and directed. As a matter of fact, they are not. Why this is so, is a matter for speculation. Unfortunately we do not know what makes

²³ Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 90.

²⁴ H. C. Hoffsommer, "Relation of Cities and Larger Villages to Changes in Rural Trade and Social Areas in Wayne County, New York," *Bulletin No. 582*, Cornell University, Agricultural Experiment Station, Oct., 1932, p. 25.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 112-126.

groups function efficiently.²⁶ Perhaps the reason why genius does not burn on Main Street, is because the quality of the professional talent is low. The village parson, teacher, doctor and lawyer are generally the culls or indifferent specimens of their class. Most first-rate talent is claimed by the city. Another reason may be the hindrance imposed by too intimate and personal association. For this engenders jealousy and conflict, thus frustrating effort. Overorganization of the community and the consequent dissipation of talent in too many fields may render leadership relatively inefficient. Possibly there is lack of challenge to talent in the very limitations of the village. Douglass suggests that the little town "reduces the demand for active life to the scale of the average man's native capacities, just as its less exacting demands fit in with the limited power of the aged."²⁷ Whatever the cause, leadership does not function adequately. Mediocrity is at home on Main Street, as its relatively static life and frequently misdirected efforts witness.

I have elsewhere shown that country villages are stimulated to such changes as they experience, not so much by inherent as by extraneous forces, such as crises and the coming of new personalities from the outside.²⁸ Insofar as this may hold true generally, it connotes the failure of leadership.

5. The *organization* situation is another distinguishing characteristic of villages. Its outstanding features are overorganization, lack of coördination, duplication of effort, and futility of endeavor. Overchurching illustrates this. A sample study of 140 villages revealed an average of 5.6 churches per village, with no village having only one church, but with two having fifteen, and sixty having seven or more.²⁹ Counting their auxiliaries, there was an average of over sixteen church organizations per village.³⁰ Neither the open country nor the city begins to be so church-ridden as does the village.

Much the same condition holds in other forms of association. The

²⁶ See J. C. Almack, "Efficiency in Socialization," *Am. Jour. Sociology*, Vol. 31, pp. 241-249.

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 94.

²⁸ N. L. Sims, *A Hoosier Village*, Chap. VII.

²⁹ Brunner, Hughes, Patten, *American Agricultural Villages*, p. 175.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

lodges head the list, averaging six to eight per village and in the Far West nearly ten. Altogether, seventy-six varieties were found in the several regions.³¹ Next are civic organizations of numerous kinds, averaging 32 to a village.³² Purely social organizations averaged 2.7 to the village. Here again the Far West, closely followed by the Middle West, had the largest number. One Iowa village boasted 18 clubs and as many rival cliques. Such cliquing prevails widely and constitutes a disturbing factor in village life.³³ Economic organizations of eight or ten types, such as Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs and the Grange, also are too numerous. The greatest number of dead organizations are of this type. So-called patriotic societies, such as the American Legion and the D.A.R., also are abundantly present. An average of 1.25 organizations per village devoted to education was listed. The Parent-Teachers' Associations were the most numerous.³⁴ A small per cent of village organizations were devoted to athletics and a still smaller number to music.³⁵ About two-thirds of the villages had socio-religious organizations, usually Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts.

On the average for all four sections of the country, there were 21.1 community organizations³⁶ per village. Adding these and the 16.1 church organizations gives the typical village at least 37 organizations. If one were to include the absolutely unnecessary duplication of retail businesses found in villages, the problem would loom still larger. Veblen has estimated that four-tenths of the retail trade organization could be written off as wasteful duplication.³⁷ Thus the overorganized situation becomes evident. It means that organizations will be small, weak, and uncoordinated, and that many will be duplicating one another's effort to do poorly what could be better accomplished at a fraction of the cost. The same people will supply the majority of the members of all the societies. These are the well-known "joiners" who parcel out their energies in so many relations that there is little return anywhere. The whole situation amounts to social waste and community neglect. The con-

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 194.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 198-199.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

³⁷ Thorstein Veblen, "Farm Labor for the Period of the War," *The Public*, July 20, 1918, p. 920.

trast between the little town and the agricultural village of ancient or Colonial days is striking. The latter was a community indeed, where joint action ruled; but the little town is an organization where joint action is often reduced to the minimum.

6. *Social democracy* is another village characteristic, at least when comparison is made with the city, if not with the open country. Where racial homogeneity is absent, as in the South and Southwest, there isn't much democracy. But even there mutual acquaintanceship and personal association soften class distinctions.

Villages often have their cliques and clans, but these do not signify stratification. There is inequality of wealth, but it rarely means segregation. Unless complicated by racial heterogeneity, villages do not have a leisure class. Everybody works and is expected to. Common labor does not stigmatize. Pride of position, which normally fosters aristocratic tendencies, is not tolerated. Conspicuous display and superior ways are subject to too much open ridicule to survive very long. The democracy of the village thus allies it more with the open country than with the city.

7. Finally, the smaller type village is unique in that it is a *concentrated neighborhood*. "It may fairly be called the residuary possessor of neighborliness," says the author of *The Little Town*.³⁸ In this the ancient agricultural community finds its successor. People dwell in close proximity and constant contact. They know and are known by their fellow villagers. Life is highly personal—doubtless too much so—but after all, richer and more satisfying than otherwise. It gives one about a fifty-fifty chance of owning his own home—something that the city does not do. It gives him membership in a primary group having more variety of types and greater diversity of occupations than a neighborhood of farmers. The villager is thus reasonably assured of a good social heritage. The primary social virtues, growing up as they do "about simple, direct and personal interrelationships and exchange of services between people," are his birthright.³⁹ It gives him withal a chance to be somebody, to have place and value in the eyes of a little world. Prosaic, narrow, homely, wasteful of its energies, and without vision of its possibil-

³⁸ H. P. Douglass, *ibid.*, p. 54.

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 56.

ities, the country village is yet the most human and perhaps the most normal part of the social order.

Relations of Villages and Farms

Villages and farms are mutually dependent in several ways. However, the village is, if anything, more dependent upon the farming area than is the latter upon the village. A detailed analysis of these relations will make this clear.

1. The first relation has to do with *marketing agricultural products*. The typical village is a shipping center thru which the farms reach the larger markets of the world. This process involves not only transport but storage and credit, with some packing and selling agencies. However, marketing is not the most important function. Moreover, farmers' coöperatives tend to curtail it.

2. *Manufacturing*, which, we have already found, is the chief occupation of larger villages, is closely allied with marketing. Most village industries are engaged directly in the transformation of farm products, the local plant affording the market. These industries are chiefly concerned with preserving agricultural products, working wood, and fabricating other local materials. The food producing establishments, such as canneries, drying plants, creameries, flour and grist-mills, account for over one-third of all; and those utilizing wood and tobacco amount to another 30 per cent.⁴⁰ Of strictly manufacturing plants there is an average of 3.3 per village.

It is important to note that these industries are largely dependent upon the raw materials produced on the farms. Very little capital or material is drawn from outside their localities.⁴¹ These facts are little appreciated by the ambitious village. It often has visions of attracting manufactures quite beyond the range of its local resources. In most cases it fails when it ventures outside the limits of its farm products and into fields dominated by urban forces.

It is hard to say whether or not manufacturing is the chief source of income for the village. Judging from its average importance among occupations, there is a presumption that often it is.

⁴⁰ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁴¹ Brunner, Hughes, Patten, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.

3. *Merchandising goods and services needed by the farmers and villagers themselves* is a third function. Goods from the cities and the world at large are distributed to the local group. Next to manufacturing this is the chief function of the village and its greatest source of income. The village once had a more or less well-defined trade zone, but under present conditions it is unable to monopolize the trade within this zone. It must compete with other villages, with mail-order houses, and with the coöperative buying of farmers. These conditions together with excessive duplication of establishments render the little town's economic relations to the country uncertain.

4. *Recreational and social services* also are rendered. The automobile has made the village the social center for its farm constituency. The consolidated school and the high school draw the country youth; the churches, clubs, and lodges attract farm members; and moving pictures, band concerts, pool halls, bowling alleys and ball games bring the farmers to town for recreation.

5. *Personal and professional services* constitute a fifth class. The doctor, the dentist, the lawyer, the barber, the undertaker, the beauty-parlor, and other agencies are located in villages and towns. Insofar as there are hospitals and public libraries available to the farm population, they too are found at the trading centers. Farmers require such services in accordance with their standard of living, and are dependent upon the towns to supply them.

The degree to which the village supplies services depends generally upon its size, altho size alone is not invariably the determining factor. Social influences in the community play a part and may offset mere size.⁴² The little hamlet renders only a few services, such as school, church, lodge, and the general store, while the town of 2,500 to 5,000 population will supply all the ordinary needs of the farm population. Between these two are villages of around 1,000 population that render a considerable tho not a highly diversified and specialized range of services.

⁴² C. R. Hoffer and Margaret Cawood, "Service Institutions and Organizations in Town-country Communities," *Special Bulletin No. 208*, Michigan State College Agricultural Experiment Station, Feb., 1931, p. 28.

The service areas of villages are by no means fixed. They expand and shrink as villages compete and differentiate and specialize their services. In the last twenty years there seems to have been a general widening of service areas due to the freer patronage of village institutions by farmers. At the same time the larger centers have extended their zones of influence at the expense of the smaller villages. Meantime, the overlapping of the service areas of several centers has become more pronounced.⁴³

6. That *agriculture* is the chief foundation of the village must be evident from the foregoing analysis. The economic dependence of the village upon farm conditions makes it an integral part of the rural order. The village is apt not to realize this or wisely adjust itself to the situation; so the relation of the two groups creates important problems.

7. Certain *laws of town and country relations* remain to be stated. (1) Since village growth and prosperity depend upon the wealth and standard of living of the farmers in its trade zone, it may be said that a low-standard-of-living farm population will give a low-standard village; and conversely, a high-standard-of-living farm population will give a high-standard village. (2) A corollary of this is that social relations are meagre and superficial between the two groups where low standards prevail, and numerous and full where they are high. In the first case, contacts will be confined largely to immediate purchases, "just because the wants and therefore interests of the purchaser are restricted." Hence there will be little mutual association in schools, clubs, churches, libraries, or community events. Where the standards are high, relations do not end with mere trade, but tend to spread into the field of other interests. The two groups thus become linked in various institutions and activities.⁴⁴ (3) Where, for any reason whatever, the standards of village and country become unequal, conflict tends to prevail. The village as a trade center may lag behind the country, failing to meet its needs or satisfy its demands. Irritation and antagonism re-

⁴³ Kolb and Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1935, p. 116.

⁴⁴ C. J. Galpin, "The Village in Relation to the Surrounding Country": Paper issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

sult. Or the village may forge ahead of the country under some internal stimulation, set higher standards in its institutions, health, sanitation, and personal conduct than the farmers are used to, and thus cause strain. The disparity will manifest itself in either case in various concrete acts of aggression and retaliation.

In 1924 the Institute of Social and Religious Research found that over one-fifth of the villages studied were in actual conflict with their farm areas, while about the same number were in active coöperation and the rest in neutral relations. The tendency seemed to be for the chances of conflict to increase with the size of the village.⁴⁵ The restudy of these communities in 1930 found three-fourths of them had become positively coöperative, with only six still in conflict. It is suggested that increasing contacts, population changes, and improved business methods caused the growth in harmony.⁴⁶ However, back of these factors was the automobile, which enabled the farmer to patronize the town that served him best. This brought the towns into active competition. Meantime the chain stores had appeared to put business on a cash basis, and to cheapen merchandise, with the result that local enterprises began to adopt measures designed to please their country patrons. At the same time, the organization of various coöperative marketing associations gave the farmers a degree of independence of local middlemen. At first village merchants, bankers, and tradesmen fought the coöperatives, but when it became obvious that farmers' coöperatives with government backing had come to stay, it dawned upon the villagers that in the long run they too would profit to the degree the coöperatives benefited the farmers. Moreover, farmers' antagonism towards the towns was apparently softened by the A.A.A., supporting as it did the price of farm commodities. Thus a variety of influences brought about better relations. Therefore when the third survey of the 140 villages was made in 1936, relations were found to be substantially improved. The causes of misunderstanding of a dozen years earlier had disappeared, among them the issue of prices. Some new stresses had developed, especially in the South,

⁴⁵ Brunner, Hughes, Patten, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

⁴⁶ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

because of the depression, but generally there was little active conflict, and where positive coöperation was not found, a state of neutrality existed.⁴⁷

It is probably true, as Galpin suggests, that if both groups are on a relatively high plane of living, the chances of estrangement will be fewer than otherwise. It is therefore to their mutual advantage to work together. The village, by virtue of its compactness and consequent greater ease of unified action, may well take the initiative in this. Too often, however, its attitudes and outlook stand in the way of a successful appeal to the farmers.

In the first place, if it could turn its face definitely away from the city and smile upon those of its own locality, relations would improve. The urban aspirations of the little town involved in aping city ways and copying city business practices are not to its lasting advantage. Specifically, price-supporting and combinations designed to sustain prices and destroy price cutters have crept into the villages. Perhaps village tradesmen are often the victims of city manufacturers and wholesalers, who more and more fix retail prices. Even so, it behooves them to combine against the city rather than with it against the farmer. They might gain by cutting loose from the alliance made with the cities thru Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis clubs, and by cultivating clubs formed of villagers and farmers. The Farm Bureau, coöperative associations and other farm organizations should concern them more than the Rotarians and Chambers of Commerce.

Again, the village could well abandon the notion that free band concerts and tickets for prize drawing are adequate means to secure coöperation. They are obviously only devices for getting trade. A full participation in the organized life of the community should be offered to the farmer instead. His advice should be sought and his assistance invited in all enterprises.

Until the village gets away from the idea of something for "us" and seeks something for "all" in the village and country alike, not much progress will be made. Where the village has a high standard

⁴⁷ E. de S. Brunner and Irving Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, Columbia University Press, 1937, pp. 88-92.

and a wholesome outlook in the midst of a low-standard farm area, its procedure must be exceedingly patient and tactful, if the farmers are to be won and eventually lifted up to an equally high plane of living.

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Topics for Discussion

1. What would be your specifications as to size, service agencies, and institutions for a farmers' town in a general farming area of 500 farm families?
2. What reasons are there for thinking that an unincorporated village center of 2,000 people, such as is found in New England, would normally have less friction with its farm population than would an incorporated village of equal size in the West or South?

3. Argue pro and con the proposition that in the long run the village cultural area (educational, recreational, religious, etc.) will coincide with its trade area.

4. From which do strictly farmer villages suffer more, an agricultural depression or an industrial depression?

5. Are the country villages and small towns more or less secure economically today than they were before 1900?

6. Have villages of less than 1,000 population with which you are acquainted grown or tended to decline in the last two decades? To what do you attribute the change in particular cases?

7. What influence has an improved standard of living for farmers had on the relation between villages and farms?

8. What effect would the extensive development of large-scale agriculture have on rural villages?

9. Which of the two general ties between farms and small villages are the stronger, the economic or the social?

PLANNED COMMUNITIES

THE term "planned communities" is used to describe a new tendency in rural settlements in order to emphasize its departure from the traditional American mode. Strictly speaking, we were talking about planned communities in the first two chapters of this part, for nothing could be more a matter of design than the ancient village. Similarly, the New England town, the Communist societies, and the Mormon villages were all laid out according to a preconceived pattern. It is not the newness of the idea, but rather the revival of an old idea under new circumstances and its application by new agencies that make it significant. Planned communities are, therefore, to be restricted in our usage to certain new efforts about to be described.

America's Planless Rural Settlement Pattern

As we have seen, Colonial American communities were settlements projected on the lines of Old World models. They were tried and true forms of living together on the soil. However, they did not generally propagate themselves in the colonization of the American hinterlands. Instead, those regions became the seat of a rural civilization that grew up virtually without any social plan or purpose, in keeping with a *laissez faire* policy. That civilization came to be characterized by a haphazard, solitary, communityless manner of living that has neither satisfied man's social needs nor fostered the most stable type of agriculture. If we ask why this has happened, several factors must be considered.

1. In the first place, *land hunger* played a part. Those who pushed out of New England into the wooded wildernesses and later on to the prairies of the West desired land. It was about the only means of livelihood. Moreover, the very abundance of available

land tended to create a certain greed for it. Furthermore, early in the Nineteenth Century, and even in the latter part of the Eighteenth, land had acquired a speculative value. Thus the quest for land became the main economic motive of the dwellers in the compact settlements of the East. This motive was sufficient to lead many to forego the advantages of communal living and to venture into the solitudes. In the eagerness for possession, they did not wait to go in colonies, or if they did, it was not to preserve the colony at the expense of possession. So community was sacrificed for self-aggrandizement by the pioneers to the hinterlands.

2. There were, of course, *difficulties in the way of assembling congenial groups* for colonization. Such consanguinity, or religious, economic or social idealism as was necessary for coherence of a sufficient number to form a colony was not often at hand. In the settlement of New England these factors had been leading ones. They had brought the Pilgrim and Puritan companies. And for a hundred years and more, similar bonds had united the groups that had gone out to establish the new towns in the back country. So true was this that it has been said that each New England town once represented a distinct idea. But by the time of the great westward movement of population this idealism had lost force. The country had become safer for the solitary family. Membership in a homogeneous body had become less exigent for the average individual. Under these circumstances, group colonization ceased to play the part it once had.

3. These forces were not, however, the only nor the most important causes of the development of a compact rural civilization. *The land survey system* under the Ordinance of 1787 and the government policy that followed of disposing of the public domain were more responsible. The vast territory acquired by the Federal Government at the founding of the Republic was surveyed after a rectangular or checker-board plan. Thus it was divided into sections and quarter sections and in such fashion it was offered for sale. At first only large tracts could be purchased, but later quarter sections were available. Always, however, it had to be taken in blocks as surveyed. The effect of this was to foster the isolation of farmsteads.

4. At no time during the first eighty years of the nation's history did the Government have any plan for the development or guidance of the civilization that was forming on its wide areas. Its only motive was to sell land for revenue with which to pay its debts. There was no effort to foster home building or to direct the mode of settlement. Even when the policy of offering the public lands for homesteading in preference to other purposes was finally adopted, *no scheme for the planning* of communities went with it. Nor was there any until the resettlement projects of the New Deal administration were launched in the fourth decade of this century. Hence the configuration of rural society was to the land survey pattern.

Thus zeal for land ownership, a survey system, and an unplanning government were the factors mainly responsible for the rural situation. They fostered a civilization of isolated living, destined to become socially inadequate and burdened with problems. The seasoned experience of ages which had taught men a mode of dwelling on the soil was forgotten. And now we seem to be paying for our failure with a country-life problem, that is the plague of the nation. We are compelled to face the fact that in certain important respects the lot of the average farmer has become about the most disheartening and tragic to be found among agriculturists anywhere in the Western World.

Students of rural society are just beginning to appreciate the number of problems that have arisen from the checker-board land survey, the land sale policy, and the *laissez faire* attitude of our government. And now that our country life is set in fixed molds, they are beginning to seek ways of improving it thru directed land settlement and the planning of rural communities. To a study of these efforts we may now turn.

Unsettled Lands

The basis of rural society is, of course, land. When, therefore, the question of planning communities is raised, we need to know how far there is land available on which to establish them. Altho

practically all of the public domain suitable for farming was long ago disposed of, there still remain about 162,000,000 acres located chiefly in the arid inter-mountain regions of the West and the Southwest. Most of this land is so poor that no one wants it. In the main it is grazing land, and nearly half is severely eroded from over grazing.¹ Perhaps 30,000,000 acres can be reclaimed thru irrigation and settled. Another small portion outside the irrigable areas may perhaps prove suitable for colonization. But at best there is not great promise from the public domain.

In the humid regions of the South and the Great Lakes there are 235,000,000 acres of unoccupied lands. These are largely privately owned cut-over timber areas, only a small part of which, however, can be made suitable for farming. It is estimated that in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 acres of good land and in addition drainable areas aggregating 75,000,000 acres in Florida, Louisiana, Georgia, Texas, North Carolina, and Minnesota can be reclaimed for agriculture.

Thus the undeveloped and unoccupied areas offer considerable room for colonization.

Another possible source is state lands ceded to the commonwealths at one time and another from the Federal Government. These aggregate around 30,000,000 acres, and are confined almost wholly to seventeen states of the West. They are leased for grazing and cultivation.

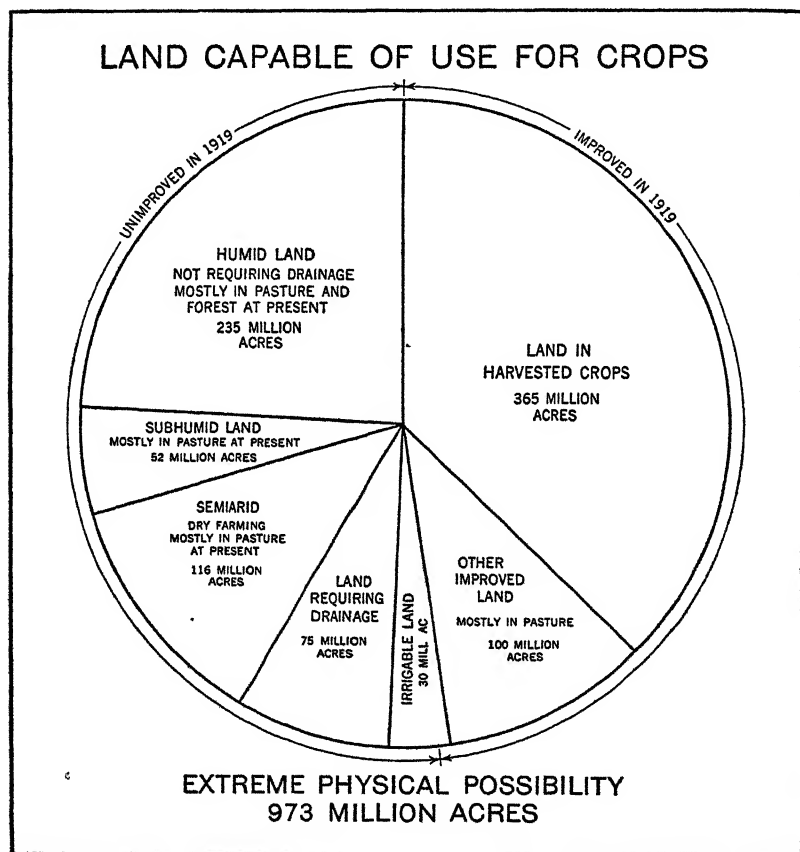
A new form of public domain has been acquired in many states from property reverting to the government for taxes. The agricultural depression has been responsible for much of this. Altho no accurate record of the area thus acquired is available, estimates put it at 50 million acres.² Thus there are probably some 75,000,000 to 80,000,000 acres under control of state and local government.

In the Western states the railroads own not less than 17,000,000 acres given them by the government when they were built. This land is leased for agriculture and grazing. Here too is territory that might be used for colonization.

¹ *United States Department of Agriculture Yearbook*, 1938, pp. 13, 223.

² *Yearbook of Agriculture* 1938, U.S.D.A., p. 232.

A great deal of the unoccupied land is privately owned in large tracts. The same is true of other occupied lands that might conceivably be acquired and colonized by owner operators in place of

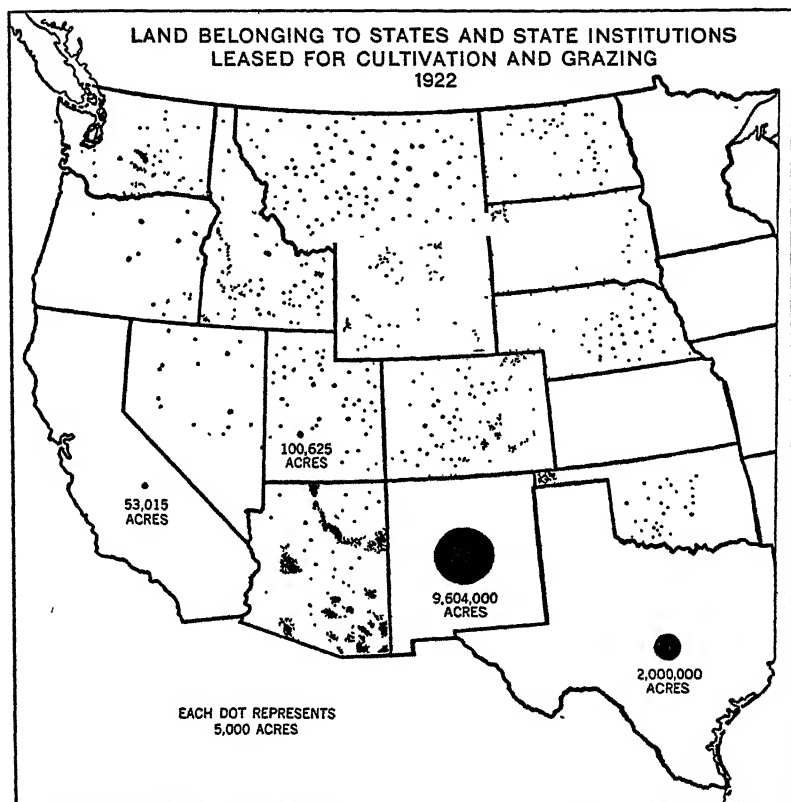


23. Potential Crop Areas

Source: L. C. Gray, O. E. Baker, F. J. Marschner, and B. O. Weitz, "The Utilization of Our Lands for Crops, Pasture and Forests," *United States Department of Agriculture Yearbook*, 1923, p. 427.

tenants. Between the occupied and unoccupied tracts thus concentrated in a few hands no distinction can be made for the want

of data. Nevertheless, this concentration needs to be considered, for it bears upon the availability of land for the purposes in view. By way of illustration, the State of California has found that more



24. State-Owned Lands Leased for Cultivation

Source: L. C. Gray, Charles L. Stewart, Howard A. Turner, J. T. Sanders, and W. J. Spillman, *op. cit.*, p. 424.

than 4,000,000 acres of its cultivatable lands are owned by 310 proprietors.³

³ Report of the Commission on Land Colonization and Rural Credit of the State of California, 1916, p. 7.

The Great Lakes region shows a similar concentration of ownership of unoccupied lands. In Minnesota eleven owners hold 596,000 acres, or an average of 54,000 acres each. In Wisconsin twenty-five persons hold 1,428,000 acres, or an average of 57,100 acres to the person. In Michigan there are twenty-six individuals owning 836,700 acres, or an average of 32,000 acres to each owner.⁴ The Industrial Relations Commission some years ago stated that farms of 1,000 acres and over, comprising 19 per cent of all farm land, were owned by one per cent of the farm owners of the United States.⁵

About two decades ago Professor J. L. Coulter estimated that over 200,000,000 acres in the United States were then owned by 47,276 persons—an average of 4,230 acres each, which meant that one-fourth of our agricultural area was owned by six-ten-thousandths (.0006) of our population.⁶

It is apparent from this brief survey that in the aggregate much land as yet unoccupied can be made available for settlement, and that a considerable area owned by the states and railroads, altho in part occupied by renters, might conceivably be acquired for land settlement projects. And as a final source, we note the great amount of land held in large tracts and plantations. These estates are for the most part occupied by tenant farmers or landless men, but it is possible that such estates could be reorganized and peopled by owner operators.

With the checking up of population growth in the nation, the over-development of production in agriculture, and the urban trends in settlement, the need for new lands and the prospects for new colonization projects are not manifest. Nevertheless it is inevitable that readjustments will take place. Wide areas of submarginal lands may well be vacated and turned back to forests and large numbers of country people resettled in more favorable localities. The Federal Government has already proposed a policy of this sort and taken some steps looking to its realization. The pros-

⁴ United States Department of Agriculture *Bulletin No. 1295*, p. 17.

⁵ Commission on Industrial Relations, *Final Report*, p. 30.

⁶ Report of the Commission on Land Colonization and Rural Credit of the State of California, 1916, p. 101.

pects are therefore growing brighter for a rational remodeling of the rural order. Should this be undertaken on a large scale, there will be abundant opportunity for socially planned colonization.

The Federal Government and Rural Community Planning

Responsibility for communityless rural America must be charged chiefly to the Federal Government, and to it we may justly look for some great corrective movement. Such a movement would naturally spring from the agency having charge of the public domain, the Reclamation Bureau of the Department of the Interior. Under this Bureau falls the work of reclaiming waste lands by drainage and irrigation for settlement. The Bureau in 1939 reported that projects then under construction would add 2,500,000 acres to the cultivated area. When created, the Bureau was definitely committed to the task of developing farms for homeseekers. That policy promised new possibilities for planning rural communities. Meantime much money has been spent on reclamation projects. The sum already aggregates several hundred millions. In 1934, \$25,000,000 were spent on projects in arid and semi-arid regions. In 1938 the sum was \$65,000,000, and in 1939 it reached \$93,000,000. It has gone into great irrigation and drainage undertakings that private or local state initiative could not or would not have attempted. But so far as land has been reclaimed, it has been disposed of to individuals on the basis of first come, first served, and without regard to community building. In fact, the Bureau's projects have been concerned with engineering primarily. The reclamation work has therefore failed humanly and socially. It has missed its real object.

The Reclamation Service itself finally became aware of this failure. An investigation of future reclamation possibilities, carried out a few years ago by a committee appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, has significance. In his instructions to that committee, the Secretary said it was necessary to determine how rural communities could be created. He expressed the opinion that they must

be planned and organized as a corrective to the rural exodus. In its report the committee reacted to that suggestion in certain very significant conclusions. They were stated as follows:

"The experience of the United States and of other countries has led to a new view of reclamation. Reclamation is not complete when engineering works have been constructed, but only when successful and happy farming communities are established on the land reclaimed."⁷ "Without them, water charges cannot be paid, irrigation will cease, drainage canals will fill up. Obviously, reclamation is a human as well as an engineering problem. The main object of reclamation therefore must be to establish farming communities with a fair chance of success. Engineering works and all other technical aid must be directed to this end."⁸

Such a program was indeed seriously considered by the government in 1924, when Dr. Elwood Mead, an expert in land colonization, was appointed Commissioner of Reclamation.

Moreover, the advisory committee to the Secretary of the Interior on rural development in the South specifically recommended that the Bureau of Reclamation undertake demonstration colonization. It studied suitable areas in the cut-over lands of the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi, and suggested the establishment of six model communities. It recommended the coöperation of the various departments of the government in this project, believing that a few successful colonies would give impetus to the movement as a remedy for the rural problem. This committee also emphasized the fact that the Reclamation Bureau has full power and is the only Federal agency that has the authority, requisite skill, experience, and organization for executing work of this kind.

This report outlined the principles that experience has shown to be necessary for successful land settlement under the new program of reclamation.

⁷ "Reclamation and Rural Development in the South," *House Document No. 765*, Part I, 69th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

In the language of Dr. Mead, the principles approved by the Committee are stated: ⁹

1. Settlers must be selected. Developing farms requires a certain amount of capital and certain definite qualities. Without these only disappointment can result.

2. They must be settled on the land, not in isolated units, but in groups or colonies of sufficient size to secure economic and social advantages.

3. There must be aid and direction in the preparation of the land. In this, coöperation is important. Settlers working as a community can do many things better than as individuals working alone.

4. Many settlers who love farming and who, if given a chance, will become good farmers, have inadequate capital. They should be helped to get a start by means of credit banks or other special arrangements.

5. Markets must be studied, crop rotations suggested, and a program of marketing worked out suited to the conditions which govern transportation from the producers to markets.

6. Payments of the initial years must be made as easy as possible.

7. The aim should be ownership of small farms rather than tenancy on large estates.

The New Deal land program has failed to emphasize the most commendable features of the program toward which the Reclamation Service was tending. A partial explanation of this is perhaps to be found in the fact that it was initiated largely as an emergency measure. The ravages of the depression brought to the fore the evils of a *laissez faire* policy of land exploitation and settlement, the cumulative effects of which had done much to bring disaster to nearly a third of the farm population. In grappling with the depression problem, the government set up the Division of Subsistence Homesteads and the Resettlement and the Federal Emergency Relief Administrations, under which rural resettlement proj-

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

ects were begun. These projects are being completed and carried on by the Works Progress and the Farm Security Administrations.

The resettlement program means venturing into a new field of community planning, involving, not the development of new lands, as the Reclamation Service does, but the purchase of improved lands for settlement purposes and of marginal settled lands for the purpose of abandoning them for agricultural use. The chief motive was not to develop compact communities but to provide relief for the distressed and disadvantaged classes of the nation.

In most of the states land was purchased on which to relocate farmers from submarginal areas, and low-income, partly-employed or unemployed industrial workers taken from rural non-farm localities and urban centers. The primary object of the undertaking was either relief of poverty or the better utilization of land, not better communities.

Insofar as resettlement pertains to farmers, it was their misuse of land and the resulting distress, not their failure to establish satisfactory communities, that prompted the program. At the close of 1934 the Land Planning Committee reported that 51,575,000 acres of crop land should be taken out of cultivation because of its submarginal quality.¹⁰ To carry out such a project would require the removal of a million farm families. However, it was not recommended that the removal of more than 400,000 families from 454,000 farms, comprising 75,000,000 acres, should be seriously considered.¹¹ Nor was it proposed that the Federal Government alone undertake the purchase and retirement of so vast an area. Only by a combination of Federal, State, and private effort was it thought feasible to bring about the change.

The Federal purchase program, initiated in 1934 under the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, undertook the establishment of 98 agricultural land-use adjustment projects. Seventeen of them are located in the northeastern part of the country and in

¹⁰ Report of the Land Planning Committee, *National Resources Board Report*, Dec. 1, 1934, p. 127.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

Ohio and Indiana. In this area about 278,000 acres are included. A second group, of eighteen projects, calls for the purchase of 1,357,000 acres in the cut-over regions of Florida, Washington, Oregon, and the Lake States. A third group, of 40 projects, located east of the Great Plains States and in Oklahoma and Texas, requires the purchase of 1,147,000 acres. A fourth area in the Great Plains States and in states west of that region, exclusive of Washington and Oregon, includes twenty-three land-use adjustment projects and requires the purchase of 4,013,000 acres.¹²

The Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937 laid down a definite program for the retirement of submarginal lands and the relocation and rehabilitation of displaced families.¹³

This land program now under the Farm Security Administration actually led to the resettlement of only a few thousand families. On January 1, 1939, approximately 11,800, composed of something over 55,000 men, women, and children, had been established in new homes on land capable of producing a decent living. A total of 146 projects, completed or under way, scattered thru virtually every state, were under its control. Beyond these no more were being undertaken.

Obviously, these projects are only a beginning, but they represent a significant departure from the traditional land policy, and they afforded the government an opportunity, in some instances, of establishing planned and compact rural communities. Nevertheless, except where the settlements are coöperative enterprises, they are of doubtful merit as solutions of the problem. For small-farm agriculture is already threatened by the rapidly advancing mechanization of farming. If in the long run small-farm agriculture fails, the resettlement projects will then appear to have been inadequate.

Some Successful Planned Communities

Land settlement under governmental direction has been extensively developed in several countries. During the last genera-

¹² *United States Department of Agriculture Yearbook*, 1938, pp. 234-240.

¹³ *Ibid.*

tion notable success has been achieved in Ireland, Germany, Australia, and Denmark. In these countries large estates and feudal holdings have been turned into prosperous colonies of small-holders. Many millions of acres and thousands of people have been involved in the projects of the Australian states. And by this means little Denmark has been able to lift herself from bankruptcy and poverty to become the most happy and prosperous agricultural nation of the globe. Land colonization has, therefore, the successful achievement of other countries to guide it. In the United States a few projects antedated the New Deal. They were of four kinds, viz., state enterprises, private enterprises under state guidance, exclusively private enterprises, and Federal resettlement. Examples of each are worthy of study.

1. *The state enterprises center in California.* The first colony was established at Durham in the Sacramento Valley in 1917. A site of 6,129 acres was irrigated, prepared for cultivation, and laid out as a model farm community. It was designed for general agriculture and dairying. One hundred and twenty-five farms and twenty-eight farm laborers' allotments were created. The farms ran from ten acres to one hundred and sixty acres in size; the laborers' allotments from one to two acres.¹⁴ Each farm was made an economic unit, the size necessary for profitable cultivation being determined by the nature of the soil and other factors.

The site was made sanitary and freed from malaria by creating a mosquito-abatement district. Other features of the physical layout involved a village center. In an oak grove of twenty-two acres were located fair-grounds, tennis court, ball field, auditorium, clubhouse and swimming pool, and an agricultural high school. The clubhouse was an old bunk-house, converted into ample quarters for community meetings, and equipped with dining hall and kitchen facilities. A majority of the houses of the village lie within a radius of a half-mile from the school.¹⁵ This center is based on the best models of New England villages.

¹⁴ Elwood Mead, "The New Forty-Niners," *The Survey*, Vol. 47, pp. 651-658, 702-703.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

The people admitted to the Durham Colony were carefully selected by the State Land Settlement Board. They had to be landless, and have character, industry, and a past record that seemed to guarantee success. The purchaser of a farm was required to have at least \$1,500 capital. The remainder could be paid over a period of thirty-six and a half years on an amortization plan at the rate of six per cent annually. Homes could be purchased by farm laborers without capital. A credit system also provided money for both farmers and laborers to enable them to purchase live stock and equipment. Actual residence for at least eight months of the year during a minimum period of two years is required of all settlers and no one can sell except to an actual settler.¹⁶

A farmstead engineer is employed to help the colonists plan buildings and lay out gardens and fields. An expert agriculturist also is employed as advisor and to act as agent for the Board.¹⁷

Certain regulations, reminding one somewhat of the rules of commonage in the ancient village, are imposed upon all colonists. All must conform to health and sanitary regulations made by those in charge and must observe certain rules as to the manner of cultivating the land and keeping up improvements in order to avoid depreciation. All stock-breeders have to unite in a coöperative breeders' association for the purpose of maintaining a high quality of stock. Coöperative buying and selling is also encouraged. This provision has led to a coöperative creamery and also a cold storage plant.¹⁸

After seven years, the Durham Colony was firmly established and working successfully. Altho not conforming exactly to the earlier type of village community, it has many essential features, such as compact settlement, a community center, and coöperation, if not commonage, in the major interests of the group.

A second colony was established at Delhi, California, in 1920 after the general pattern of Durham.

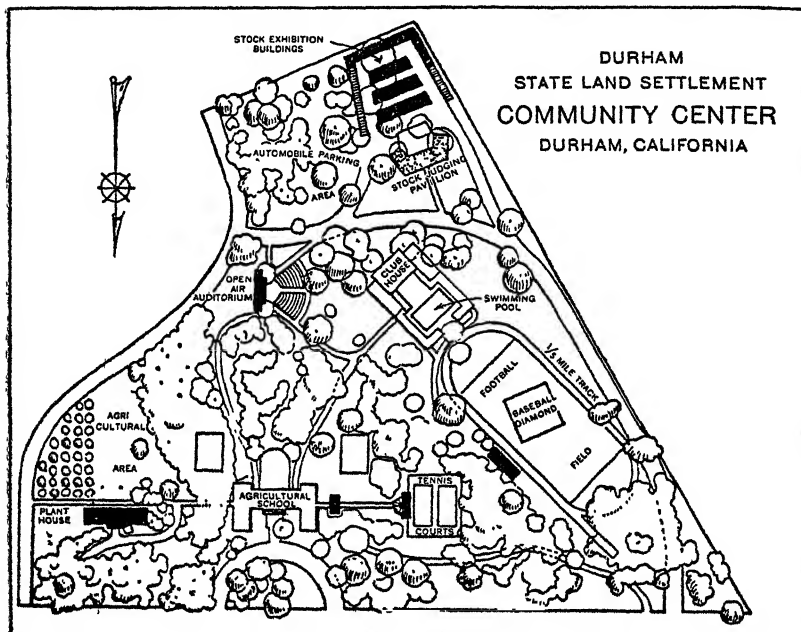
The pioneer work of this state has led to the creation of Land Settlement Commissions in other states, as in North and South Carolina.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

2. *The second type of land settlement* is found in Wisconsin. A county zoning law passed in 1929 provides for the restriction and regulation of the use of land. In all the cutover counties zones for (1) forestry and seasonal recreation exclusively; (2) recreation thruout the year and forestry exclusively; and (3) un-



25. Community Center, Durham, California

Source: Elwood Mead, "The New Forty-Niners," *The Survey*, Vol. 47, No. 18, Jan. 28, 1922, p. 653.

restricted areas for agriculture, have been established.¹⁹ Thus the settler is not only told where not to go, but where he ought to go for his own and the social good. Ultimately this should promote a wise land-use program in the region. Michigan, with a similar

¹⁹ W. A. Rowlands, "County Zoning in Wisconsin," *Stenciled Circular*, 154, College of Agriculture, Madison, Wisconsin.

cutover region, adopted in 1935 a more rigid law. Several other states have likewise been seeking zoning laws.²⁰

Altho no positive land settlement program is involved in zoning or in other efforts Wisconsin has made to bring colonization under the supervision of the State Department of Agriculture, the laws do prevent the exploitation of land-seekers. While the state does not take the initiative in establishing settlements, it attempts to give guidance by furnishing information, by laying down conditions that land agencies must observe, and by providing credit facilities for purchasers. Colonization thus remains a private matter under state supervision. The significance is that some private companies have undertaken group settlement.²¹

3. *The third type of community settlement* is by private enterprise. Of this one conspicuous example may be cited. That is near Wilmington, N.C., and under the guidance of Hugh MacRea. This man, by following the best knowledge relative to land settlement, has reared three prosperous colonies on an uncultivated tract. They are known as Castle Hayne, St. Helena, and New Holland, and comprise over 300 families, owning some 5,000 acres. The farms are small, few being over 20 acres. Market gardening is the type of agriculture.

Mr. MacRea has himself financed the development, selected the settlers, and provided expert direction to the colonies. It has not been a philanthropic project in any narrow sense, for, while affording landless men unusual opportunities to become independent farmers, it has at the same time proved profitable to the man behind the undertaking.

The success of these colonies, both economically and socially, turns upon scientific planning and direction. In this the following factors are involved:

"Low land prices and easy terms of payment.

"Ample credit for improvements and operations.

²⁰ Carter Goodrich and Others, *Migration and Economic Opportunity*, pp. 604-607.

²¹ See *op. cit.*, *Reclamation and Rural Development in the South*, and United States Department of Agriculture *Bulletin*, No. 1295.

"Careful selection of settlers, with special attention paid to securing expert farmers in various lines, whose example may be followed.

"Expert advance planning, followed by experimentation on the part of the settlers themselves.

"Small acreages, intense and diversified cultivation.

"The development of community activities, social and economic.

"Supervision and guidance after the colony is established." ²²

4. *The fourth and latest type of rural community planning* is that of the Farm Security Administration. It reports three types of projects.²³ They are:

1. Subsistence homesteading, or the creation of rural communities for families of stranded rural non-farm and low-income urban workers who could supplement their wages by the cultivation of a few acres of land.

2. Full-time farm communities planned for from 100 to 300 families located in close settlements.

3. Scattered full-time farms provided for families in areas already well established.

Obviously only the first two of these types involve the possible development of compact communities. There are 34 Subsistence Homestead projects, all of which were started in 1933. They are located in both isolated rural areas and suburban districts. Some of these communities are made up of stranded rural non-farm families. A typical instance is Cumberland Homesteads, Cumberland County, Tennessee, where the rehabilitation of some 250 families of coal-miners and saw-mill workers on 22,748 acres, divided into farms averaging 18 acres, has been undertaken. A considerable number of the homestead projects have apparently been set up in submarginal rural counties too remote from extensive industries to give economic security such as they were designed to provide. There are no reasons for thinking that the development of such communities will eventually bring about any widespread dispersion

²² *Reclamation and Rural Development in the South, op. cit.*, p. 29.

²³ *Interim Report of the Resettlement Administration*, Washington, D.C., U. S. Government Printing Office, April, 1936, pp. 14-16.

of industry to give them a sound economic basis.²⁴ The probable failure of many of them will not enhance the prestige of the Federal government in community planning.

Other Subsistence Homestead projects have been well established in promising localities. A typical case is that of the Longview Homesteads near Longview, Washington. Here on 141 acres a community of 60 low-income families has been developed. On plots of about 2 acres families are able to produce much of their food and thus supplement their wages earned in industry. The houses are provided with modern facilities, and each unit with garage, a combination cow and chickenshed, and a small orchard. The units averaged \$3,076 in cost. The community is managed by a local non-profit association, and by monthly payments the debt is amortized over a 40-year period.²⁵

The full-time clustered farm communities are designed for small farmers, who by banding together may practice the methods of large-scale mechanized agriculture, and enjoy the advantages of independent ownership and a well organized community life also. The Lake Dick, Arkansas, project, 60 miles from Little Rock, is a good example of this type. Here 80 families are settled on 3,453 acres of good land. Each family has its own individual garden tract, but most of the land devoted to cash crops is managed and tilled coöperatively. All families belong to the coöperative, which operates with modern equipment and under a scientific plan. Live stock is raised coöperatively. They have a coöperative sweet-potato-curing shed, meat-curing plant, syrup and feed mill, besides a general store, and a community building where church services and other meetings are held. There is a near-by school. Cheap electric service, water, and sanitary facilities, together with many other advantages available as a rule only to compact rural communities, are theirs. The cost per unit, which can be amortized by annual installments over a period of 40 years, was \$3,351.²⁶

²⁴ Goodrich and Others, *op. cit.*, pp. 638-659.

²⁵ "Homesteads," Farm Security Administration, Jan. 1, 1939, pp. 7-8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

Land settlement in Australia and Europe is a matter of governmental paternalism. It is the same in California, and such must it be under the Federal Government. There is seemingly no alternative, if country life is to be sanely reconstructed. If government indifference and neglect gave us this problem, let government initiative and planning solve it! At least let it demonstrate the solution far and near thruout the land until it becomes a popular movement. In the very nature of the case, however, the task will remain too big for landless men to essay for themselves. They will always need to be aided and directed by agencies that can furnish the necessary resources. The Government alone can best do this.

Thus far, no one has proposed rural community planning for any except the submarginal and the stranded landless classes. But it is perhaps as essential for the well-established landowning farmers, if country life is to be made satisfying and adequate. It would be a social calamity if the movement, once under way, should concern itself only with salvaging a society composed of farm tenants, sharecroppers, and submarginal classes. The owner-operators in their solitary habitations also need to be saved to a richer country life. They need to be reorganized in more compact settlements as a means of securing for rural society advantages that it apparently cannot have otherwise. The inspiration and initiative for this accomplishment can be provided by a paternal government.

Merits and Demerits of Compact Farming Communities

Emphasizing as we have done the desirability of village settlements for farmers, it may be well to face the possible shortcomings of such communities. The ancient type as it is found in Europe or America has them.

One is the distance between farmsteads and fields. This is often sufficiently great to consume an extraordinary amount of time in going to and fro. Attention has been called to this difficulty in Utah villages.²⁷ Where agriculture involves large farms of several

²⁷ Nelson, "A Social Survey of Escalante, Utah," *Brigham Young University Studies* No. 1, p. 41.

hundred acres, as in the wheat belt of the West and Northwest, to group the population would put the farmers great distances from their fields. However, in a type of farming so highly seasonal as wheat growing, this might not be so serious. As a matter of fact, the automobile and motor farming are rendering the problem of distance of little significance.

Another disadvantage has to do with sanitation. There is unquestionably more danger from filth and pollution for a group of people living close together than for a family in isolation. This is especially true if live stock is raised. Small country villages of the ordinary non-agricultural type are often unsanitary. But all facts seem to indicate that the village, bad as it may be, is not as unsanitary as millions of isolated farmsteads. The close settlement can, of course, more easily abate its nuisances and create wholesome conditions than can the same number of people scattered over a wide area. The planned communities of California have done this.

A third disadvantage grows out of the virtues of association itself. As has often been said, man "has difficulty in getting on either with or without his fellows even in neighborhoods."²⁸ Association tends to be too close in the village, where nothing is hidden from one's neighbors. Thus life becomes for many too personal, and petty conflicts over small things are thus easily engendered and often ripen into bitter feuds. The village in consequence has been described as the home of "petty cussedness" and "cussed pettiness." Much of this arises because of the emptiness and dullness of ordinary village life. In a rightly planned village of farmers co-operating in all things for the common good, there ought to be far less difficulty of this nature than in the unorganized trading-centers.

A fourth evil also springs from the virtues of compactness, namely, the greater possibilities of foolish group action. Suggestion and imitation have free play and the community is likely to be carried away by proposals which are more often unwise than sound. I have called attention to this in my *Hoosier Village* and others

²⁸ John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*, p. 131.

have noted the same phenomenon elsewhere.²⁹ But most of this evil is traceable to the commercial ambition of our Main Streets. And I cannot help thinking that purely farmers' villages would not be so subject to the promoter's arts.

The advantages of compact settlement have been partially stated in this and other chapters, and may be summarized at this point:

One advantage is that of having near neighbors. Man is a herding animal. He may habituate himself to a solitary existence, but it is abnormal. Naturally he wants association which isolated farmsteads prevent. However, with modern means of communication remoteness of neighbors has lost much of its significance. Physical separateness does not connote social distance as it did in times past.

A second gain from compactness is the possibility of having certain things better and cheaper than in the open country. I refer to a water, sewage disposal, electric current, and an ice supply in particular.

A third gain is in better institutions, such as school and church. As one has said: "The buying power is more highly concentrated in the community since distance is minimized, and for the same reason—distance and roads—they are able to concentrate their social energies particularly in the direction of schools, churches, sociability, and social welfare."³⁰

In the fourth place, mutual aid is facilitated thru the exchange of tools and work. Genuine neighborliness more readily flourishes among those living in close proximity.

In the fifth place, close settlement gives greater assurance of dependable professional service. This is particularly true of physicians. The village is always preferred to the open country by them; moreover, their services are less costly.³¹

*A sixth advantage comes from a real community consciousness—a "we feeling."*³² The weakness of life in the open country is the absence of such feeling. There is, no doubt, greater richness of personality where it is present. In addition a whole train of social

²⁹ H. P. Douglass, *The Little Town*, p. 92.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³⁰ Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

consequences flows from it. Two of these we shall mention under the following heads.

The seventh advantage of community living, and one which rises directly from the "we feeling," is the growth of organization. Open country dwellers do not organize much. It is as G. W. Russell, editor of the *Irish Homestead*, has said: "Our rural populations are no more closely connected for the most part than the shifting sands on the seashore. There are personal friendships, of course, but few economic or social partnerships. Everyone pursues his own occupation without regard to the occupation of his neighbors. If a man emigrates, it does not affect the occupation of those who farm land all about him. They go on plowing and digging, buying and selling, just as before. They suffer no perceptible economic loss by the departure of half a dozen men from the district. A true community would, of course, be affected by the loss of its members. . . . That is the difference between a community and an unorganized population." ³³ In the compact group the "we feeling" fosters acting together and leads men to organize their efforts.

The eighth advantage may be designated as the rewards of co-operation. I mean the economic gains from buying and selling collectively, together with numerous things the group may secure by its more efficient coöperative efforts.

Thus, the advantages of village life would seem to be greater than its disadvantages.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Does a farsighted land-use planning necessarily involve community planning?
2. What are the objectives and major problems of land-use planning?
3. Outline a program for the utilization of the submarginal land areas of the United States.
4. What difficulties in the economic field, in the people themselves, in social readjustment does any extensive program of rural resettlement encounter?
5. Can any extensive resettlement program in America be carried out by voluntary coöperation or must there be governmental direction and assistance?
6. Argue the merits and demerits of the compact village settlement for American farmers.

Part III

THE VITAL ELEMENT

basis of distinction. The 1920 census attempted in a measure to approach this by enumerating the farmers for the first time under a separate category. Despite shortcomings, it will, however, be necessary to follow the census classification in presenting data on the rural people. In this chapter it will be instructive generally to contrast the urban with the rural groups.

Numbers and Classes

The 1930 census assigned 53,820,223 persons, or 43.8 per cent of the total population of the United States, to the rural group.

Table 1 shows the numerical size of the rural group in contrast with the urban for the last six census periods.

Table 1

URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES: 1880-1930 ^a

Class	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890	1880
Total Number .	122,775,046	105,710,620	91,972,266	75,994,575	62,947,714	50,155,783
Urban	68,954,823	54,304,603	42,166,120	30,380,433	22,298,359	14,358,167
Rural	53,820,223	51,406,017	49,806,146	45,614,142	40,649,355	35,797,616
Total Per Cent .	100.0	100.0	100.0	100 0	100 0	100.0
Urban	56.2	51.4	45 8	40 0	35 4	28.6
Rural	43.8	48.6	54.2	60.0	64.6	71 4

^a *Fifteenth Census.*

The rural population as above described is made up of three classes, viz.: farmers, rural industrialists, and villagers. These three classes are not absolutely exclusive.

1. *The farmers* comprise all persons living on farms, regardless of occupation, says the 1930 census. Strictly speaking, there are a few farmers found within urban territory, for such areas include some lands devoted to agriculture. The total number of such farmers in 1930 was 287,837, or a fraction of one per cent of the whole number classified as farmers.¹

This first class is the most important, for it is the most numerous

¹ *Fourteenth Census*, Vol. V, p. 891.

and the one responsible for the chief characteristics of rural society. In 1930 it contained a total of 30,157,531 persons, constituting 24.6 per cent of the entire population of the United States. Moreover, it accounted for something over 56 per cent of the rural population. This number indicated a decrease of 1,201,127 farm dwellers as compared with the figures for 1920.

Since 1930, however, the farm population has again been on the increase. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates that the losses from 1920 to 1929, which averaged 145,000 per year, have been more than made up during the depression years of the thirties. There was a steady gain for five years, the census of January 1, 1935, showing 31,800,907 farm dwellers. The year 1936 saw a small loss, but since then there has been a steady gain. The estimates for January 1, 1939, put the number of persons living on farms at 32,059,000. This figure is close to the all-time peak. Only 1910, with an estimated farm population of 32,076,960, was higher. The number on farms at this time is fully 2,000,000 in excess of 1930. Table 2 shows the net gains and losses since 1910.

Table 2

RECENT LOSSES AND GAINS IN FARM POPULATION
OF THE UNITED STATES *

Period or Year	Net Loss of Farm Population	Net Gain in Farm Population
1910-1919	463,000	.....
1920-1924	784,000	.....
1925-1929	661,000	.....
1930-1934	.....	1,632,000
1910-1934	276,000	.....
1930	.....	328,000
1931	.....	474,000
1932	.....	722,000
1933	.....	77,000
1934	.....	31,000
1935	.....	8,000
1936	80,000	.....
1937	.....	90,000
1938	.....	240,000

* United States Dept. of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Releases June 16, 1938, and June 22, 1939.*

The gains are not uniformly distributed, but concentrated around industrial centers, in mining sections and in areas known as "subsistence farming." The Southern Appalachians, Eastern Ohio, Western Pennsylvania, the Ozarks, Eastern Oklahoma, the Birmingham industrial zone, New England, Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, and the Puget Sound and Willamette Valleys are reported by the Census Bureau to be the regions of gain. To these areas many have returned from the towns and cities, and normal migration from these areas has largely stopped. Thus the growth is explained.

The areas of decreasing farm population are the tobacco-cotton sections of Northeastern North Carolina, the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta, the Black Belt of Texas, Southwestern Oklahoma, the old plantation parts of Georgia, and the Dust Bowl, extending from Montana eastward to Western Iowa and Southwestern Minnesota.

2. *The rural industrialists* include all those of the rural group who are engaged in mining, lumbering, or fishing, together with roadhouse and tearoom keepers, storekeepers, wage-earners, teachers, suburban dwellers; those in general following non-agricultural pursuits in the country districts. It is a group having no such occupational unity as the farmers. In 1930 it numbered 14,479,257, or 11.7 per cent of the total population and 26.9 per cent of the rural. Perhaps as many as 4,000,000 of this group dwell in unincorporated villages. The rest are found in hamlets and the open-country.²

3. *The third class* involves the village dwelling portion of the rural folk, or all those living in incorporated places of less than 2,500. The total number of such places was 13,433 in 1930. In them was found 9,183,453 persons, or 7.4 per cent of the total population and 17 per cent of the rural population.

To separate the rural non-farm population into *industrialists* and *villagers* as we have done is confessedly to make an arbitrary distinction that is not altogether valid, for the two overlap. The basis for the distinction is whether or not people live in incorporated

² Brunner & Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 18.

places. Those who do we have called the villagers, and those who do not, the industrialists. But as we have seen, four million or more of the latter dwell in unincorporated villages ranging in size from 250 to nearly 2,500. The mode of dwelling for this many at least cannot, therefore, differ from that of villagers who dwell in incorporated places of similar size, since incorporation makes little or no difference in the social status. Nevertheless for the most part rural industrialists are an open-country or hamlet dwelling class and those we call villagers are dwellers in sizable aggregates. Moreover, the occupations of the industrialists are generally different from those of villagers. For these and other reasons it is well sociologically to divide the rural non-farm population as indicated.

If, however, we use the term village with more latitude, making it include all aggregations of population from 250 to 2,500, regardless of whether incorporated or not, the village class becomes somewhat more numerous than indicated. In 1930 it contained some 12 millions of the rural non-farm population, or somewhere between one-half and three-fifths of this class.³ Thus a little over 22 per cent of the entire rural population dwelt in villages of a sort. Adding to these some 4.5 millions who dwelt in places having less than 250 people, we get over 30 per cent of the rural population in population aggregates large enough to be placed on the map.⁴ There remain of the 1930 rural non-farm population some 6.4 millions outside of any aggregates. Doubtless some of these were suburban dwellers about incorporated villages and to all intents and purposes villagers.⁵ So in the last analysis only a small per cent of the rural non-farm population lives wholly beyond the pale of some kind of village society.

Perhaps the most significant development relating to the rural population during the last census period was the decline of the farm group and the growth of the rural non-farm. The former declined in every section of the country except the Pacific region, while the latter increased in every section. This change has doubtless been

³ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 18, Landis in an unpublished study found the number of villages of this class to be 18,472 in 1930.

⁴ *Ibid.* Landis found 56,575 villages of all classes in 1930.

⁵ *Ibid.*

going on for some time and if it continues for a decade or so, the two general classes of the rural population will be equal. In fact, it is not improbable that the farmers will become a minority of the rural population.⁶

Distribution

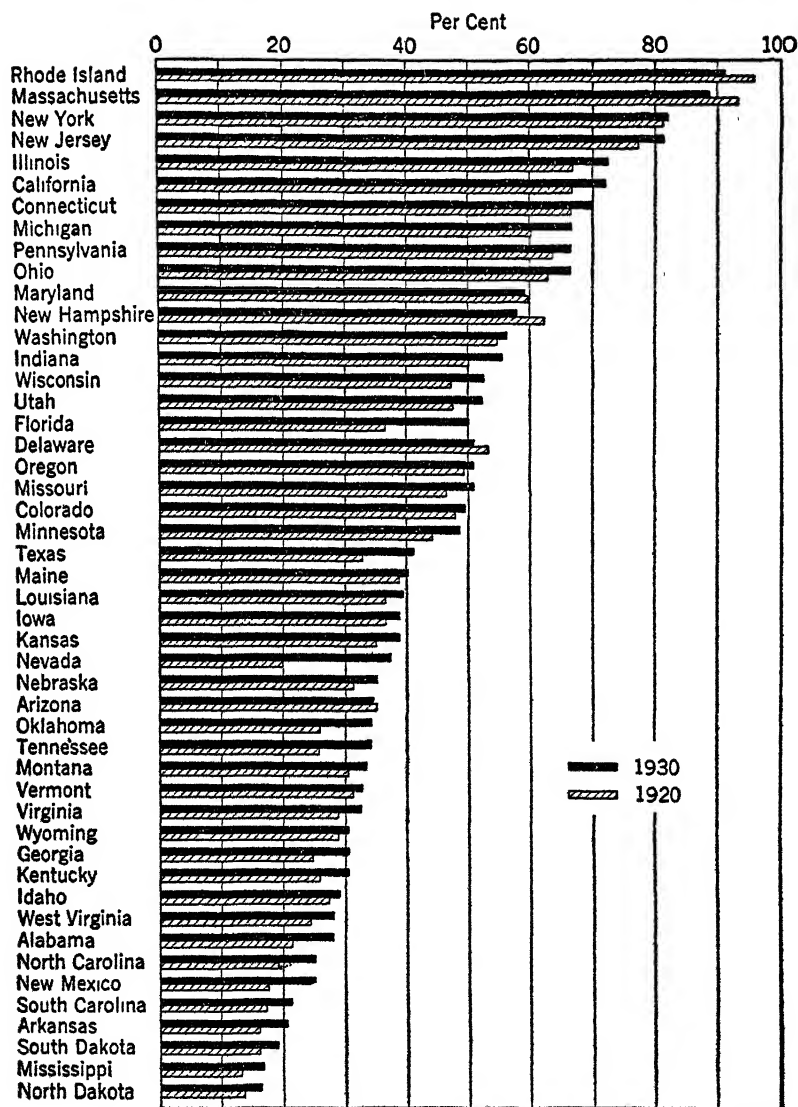
Needless to say, there is the widest variation in the relative proportions of rural and urban population in the several sections of the United States. Table 3 gives the census data showing the general distribution. Figure 26 indicates the variation in this distribution from state to state.

Table 3
URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION, BY SECTIONS
AND DIVISIONS: 1930^a

SECTION AND DIVISION	Urban	Rural	Per Cent Urban	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION	
				Urban	Rural
United States	68,954,823	53,820,223	56.2	100.0	100.0
The North	49,057,772	23,963,419	67.2	71.1	44.5
New England	6,311,976	1,854,365	77.3	09.1	03.5
Middle Atlantic	20,394,707	5,866,043	77.7	29.6	10.9
East North Central ..	16,794,908	8,502,277	66.4	24.3	15.8
West North Central ..	5,556,181	7,740,734	41.8	08.1	14.3
The South	12,904,248	24,953,385	28.1	18.7	46.4
South Atlantic	5,698,122	10,095,467	36.1	08.3	18.9
East South Central ..	2,778,687	7,108,527	28.1	04.0	13.1
West South Central ..	4,427,439	7,749,391	36.4	06.4	14.4
The West	6,992,803	4,903,419	52.6	10.2	09.1
Mountain	1,457,922	2,243,867	39.4	02.1	04.2
Pacific	5,534,881	2,659,552	67.5	08.1	04.9
East of the Mississippi River	51,978,400	33,426,679	60.8	75.3	62.1
West of the Mississippi River	16,976,423	20,393,553	45.4	24.7	37.9

^a Fifteenth Census.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.



26. Per Cent Urban in Total Population, by States, 1930-1920

It is at once obvious that the urban population is much more sectionalized than the rural, since nearly three-tenths of it is found in the Middle Atlantic division and over half in this and the East North Central division. There is thus a distinct urban zone lying in the Northeastern part of the United States. This zone is at once the urban and the industrial belt of America. Within this zone dwell 41,234,397 urban people. This number was in 1930 over ten and three-quarters millions in excess of the entire farm population of the nation. A glance at Figure 27 will reveal the distribution of the total urban population, and incidentally this urban-industrial zone.

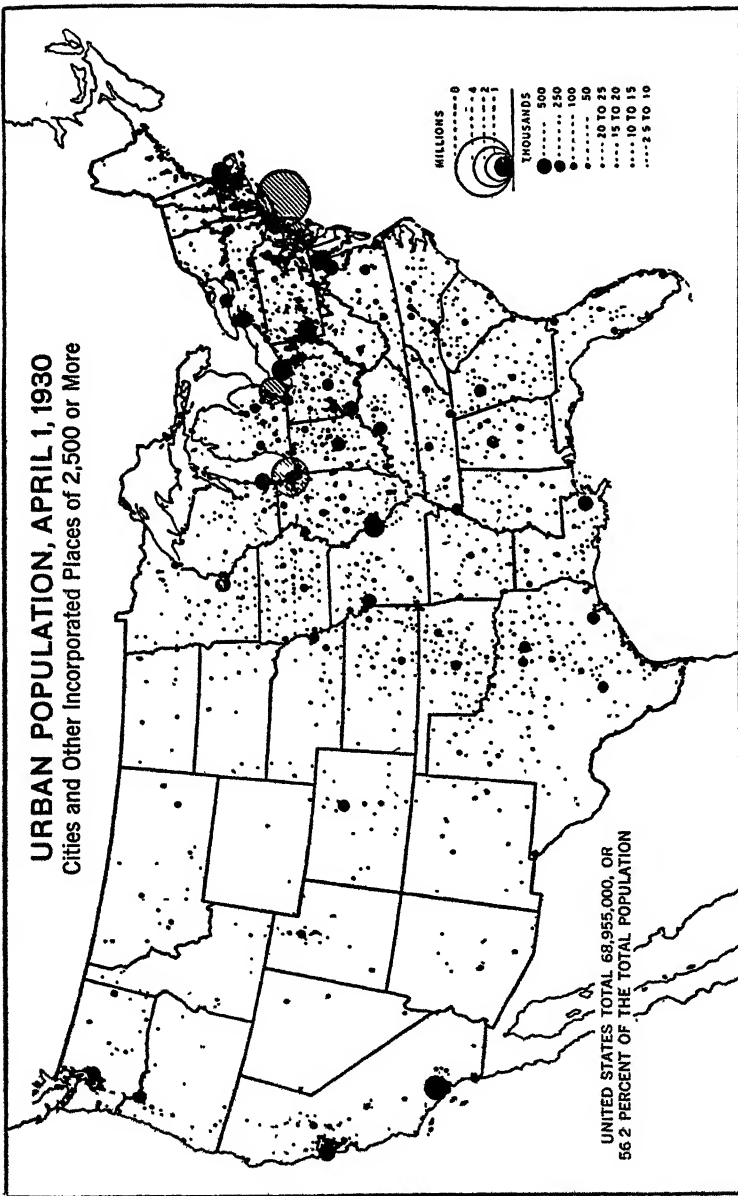
Figure 29 shows the rural non-farm population, and Figure 30 shows the incorporated village population in aggregations under 2,500 as of 1920. Altho a map of such villages on the basis of the 1930 census would be slightly different, the difference would be negligible insofar as the general distribution is concerned.

In Figure 29 is included the data of Figure 30 together with the population in unincorporated villages and non-farm folks dwelling in the open country. A glance at Figure 30 will give the impression that the village population tends to be definitely concentrated in two or three sections of the country. This would be equally true if the Figure included the unincorporated as well as the incorporated villages. In New England, which shows nearly blank in Figure 30, a true picture would appear much as in Figure 29. The Middle West, the Northwest, and the Prairie regions are distinctively the rural village strongholds of America. The South has relatively the fewest. In most of the "Colonial" region the villages run larger in size than elsewhere and enroll a larger proportion of the population. They are, however, generally industrial rather than agricultural.⁷

The distribution of hamlets, i. e., places of 25 to 250, is not shown on any of the accompanying maps, but hamlets occur rather uniformly thruout the whole country. However, they are

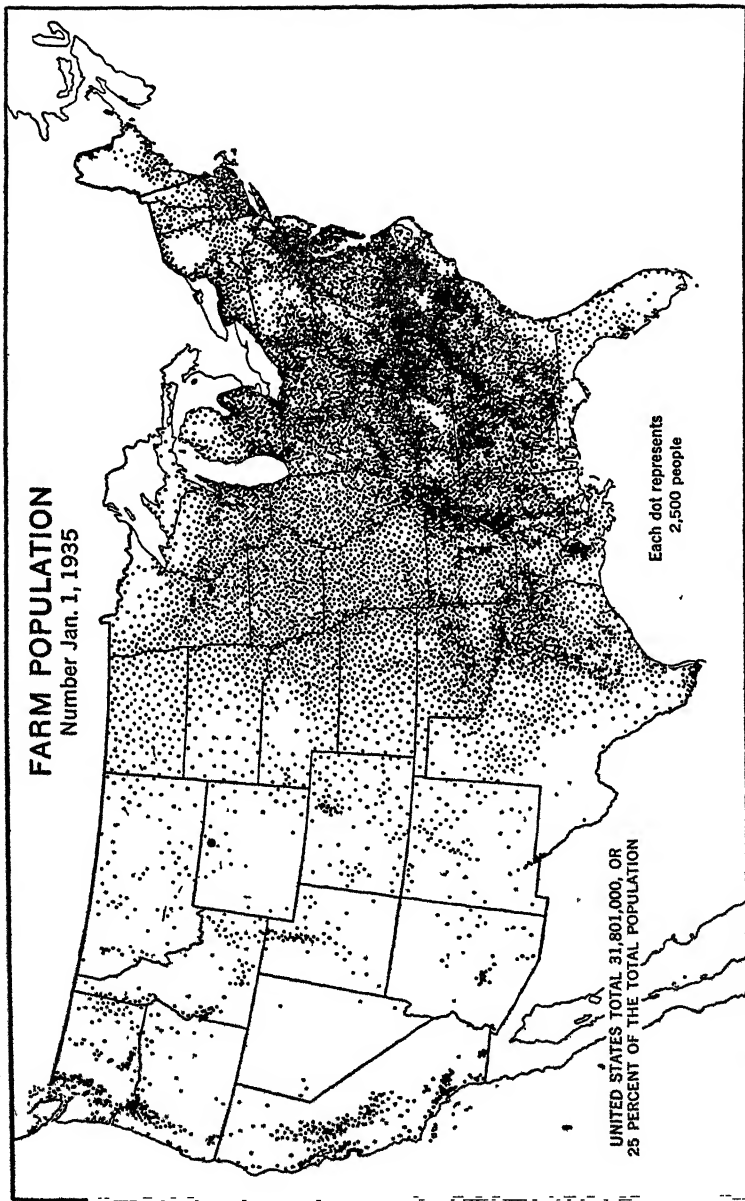
⁷ Morse & Brunner, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

URBAN POPULATION, APRIL 1, 1930 Cities and Other Incorporated Places of 2,500 or More



27. Urban Population, 1930

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population,"
 U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, Nov., 1937.

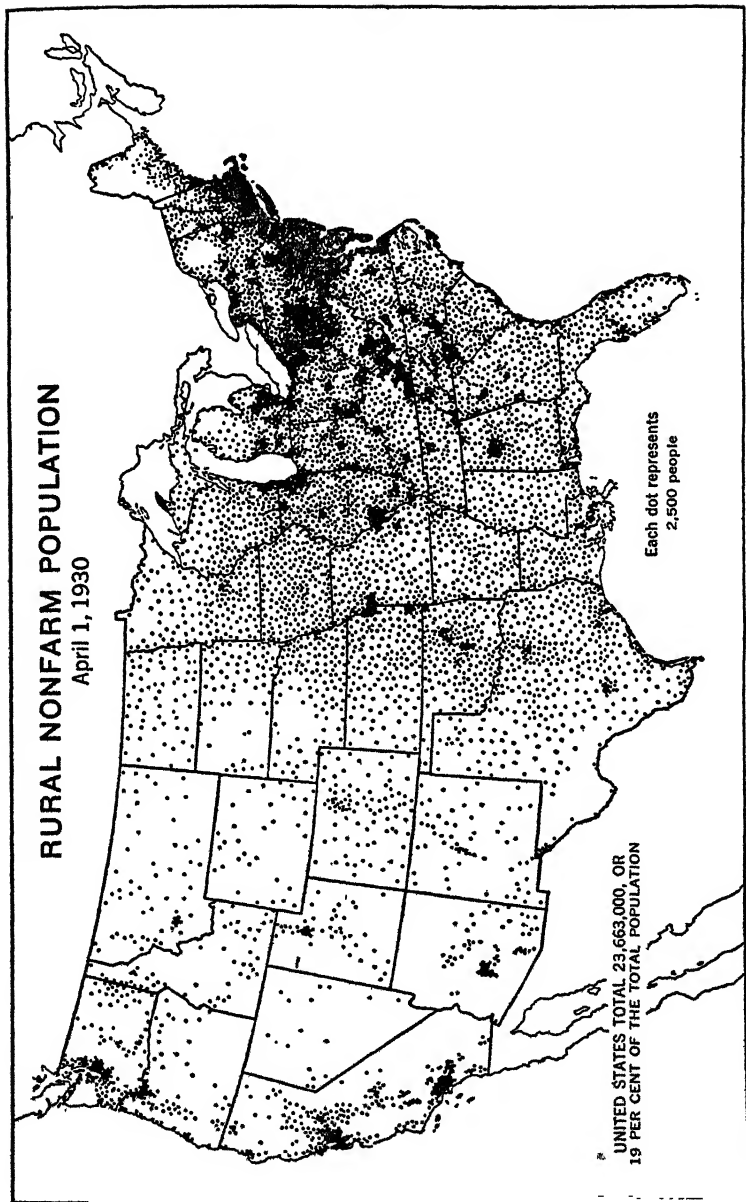


28. Farm Population, 1935

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, Nov., 1937.

RURAL NONFARM POPULATION

April 1, 1930



29. Rural Non-Farm Population, 1930

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population,"
U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, Nov., 1937.

most numerous in the Southwest, and the least so in the Pacific and Southern regions.⁸

From Figure 29 it is apparent that the farm population is relatively higher in the South than in any other general region. In the Colonial region it is proportionally the lowest. Naturally, the farm population varies numerically in direct ratio to the importance of agriculture in any region. It also varies somewhat as the type of agriculture varies. In Table 4 the number of rural people per square mile for each state in order of rank is indicated.

Increase and Decrease of Rural Population

In considering the increase or decrease of rural population the fact must be borne in mind that the rural area tends to decrease whereas the urban area tends to expand. This is because, with the growth in population, incorporated villages pass into the urban class, thus adding to the urban territory and subtracting from the rural. To be sure, some incorporated villages lose population and pass from the urban to the rural group. Cities are also constantly reaching out and incorporating rural environs. Hence in calculating the change in rural population, it becomes a question whether one should compare the same area for two census periods or merely the areas designated as rural at each period. The results obtained by the two methods are somewhat different. Thus, using the first method, the area designated as rural in 1920 had a population of 48,779,082 in 1910, and 51,406,017 in 1920, or an increase of 2,626,935 or 5.4 per cent. By the second method, where the area designated as rural in 1920 was less than the area so designated in 1910, the rural population was 51,406,017 and 49,806,146 respectively, giving an increase of about 1,599,871 or 3.2 per cent.

To make it clear just how important this difference is, it should be noted that some 525 villages that were rural in 1920 had become urban by 1930. In many cases the actual change in population was very small, for so long as a village has a population of

⁸ *Ibid.*

Table 4

RURAL POPULATION PER SQUARE MILE BY
STATES IN ORDER OF RANK: 1930

Connecticut	96.7	Vermont	26.5
New Jersey	93.4	Missouri	25.7
Pennsylvania	69.6	Wisconsin	25.4
Maryland	66.0	Oklahoma	22.6
Delaware	58.6	New Hampshire	21.2
Ohio	52.5	Kansas	18.4
Massachusetts	52.0	Maine	15.8
West Virginia	51.5	Minnesota	14.9
Rhode Island	48.8	Texas	13.9
North Carolina	48.6	Florida	12.9
Kentucky	45.1	Nebraska	11.6
South Carolina	44.8	Washington	10.1
New York	43.3	California	9.6
Tennessee	41.2	North Dakota	8.0
Virginia	40.6	South Dakota	7.3
Indiana	40.0	Colorado	4.9
Alabama	37.0	Oregon	4.8
Mississippi	36.0	Idaho	3.7
Illinois	35.5	Utah	2.8
Georgia	34.2	New Mexico	2.5
Arkansas	28.0	Arizona	2.5
Louisiana	27.9	Montana	2.4
Iowa	26.8	Wyoming	1.5
Michigan	26.7	Nevada	0.5

2,499 it is rural, but if one more person is added it becomes urban. Altho the change in absolute numbers may have been small, the actual subtraction from the rural group by the process involved during the period 1920-1930 was relatively large. At the least calculation, 1,312,500 people passed from the rural to the urban area.

Despite these facts, the Census Bureau customarily uses the second of the two methods in compiling its data. And it will be convenient for us to conform to this practice in this work.

With 8,000 taken as the dividing line between urban and rural, the Census Bureau published a table in 1903, showing the rates

Table 5

RATE OF INCREASE OF RURAL AND URBAN
POPULATION, WITH 8,000 AS THE DIVIDING
LINE, 1790 TO 1930, TOGETHER WITH
RATIO BETWEEN THE RATES

DECADE	RATE OF INCREASE OF POPULATION		Ratio of Per Cent of Increase of Urban to that of Rural
	Per Cent Urban	Per Cent Rural	
1920-1930	30.2	5.1	5.9
1910-1920	25.7	5.4	4.1
1900-1910	32.8	11.2	2.9
1890-1900	37.0	14.5	2.6
1880-1890*	60.2	14.5	4.2
1870-1880	41.1	27.2	1.5
1860-1870	59.1	15.6	3.8
1850-1860	75.1	29.9	2.5
1840-1850	99.3	30.0	3.3
1830-1840	68.2	30.1	2.3
1820-1830	82.0	31.0	2.6
1810-1820	33.1	23.1	1.0
1800-1810	69.3	35.0	2.0
1790-1800	60.4	34.2	1.8

of increase for the urban and rural groups from 1790 down to date, together with the ratios between them. The table, with data added for the last three census reports, is reproduced above.

Obviously, from the beginning the cities of the nation have been growing much more rapidly than the country. However, since 1880 the rate of growth has generally declined for both, altho in greater degree for the country.

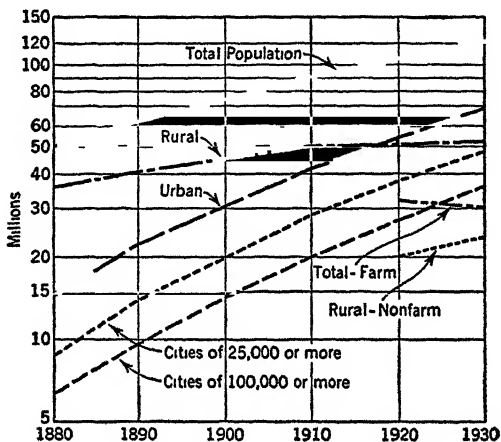
Taking 2,500 rather than 8,000 as the dividing line between country and city, Table 6 on page 167, gives the rates of increase and the ratios between the rates from 1880-1930.

During this period of 50 years each census has revealed a number of agricultural states suffering an absolute loss of rural population. The census of 1890 showed eleven such states, that of 1900

twelve, that of 1910 six, that of 1920 eighteen, and that of 1930 fifteen. If we consider only the rural-farm population, 32 states in 1930 showed a loss.

Figures 32 and 33 show general changes of rural population 1920-1930.

There was a widespread increase of the rural non-farm population, but in two-thirds of the states the rural farm population de-



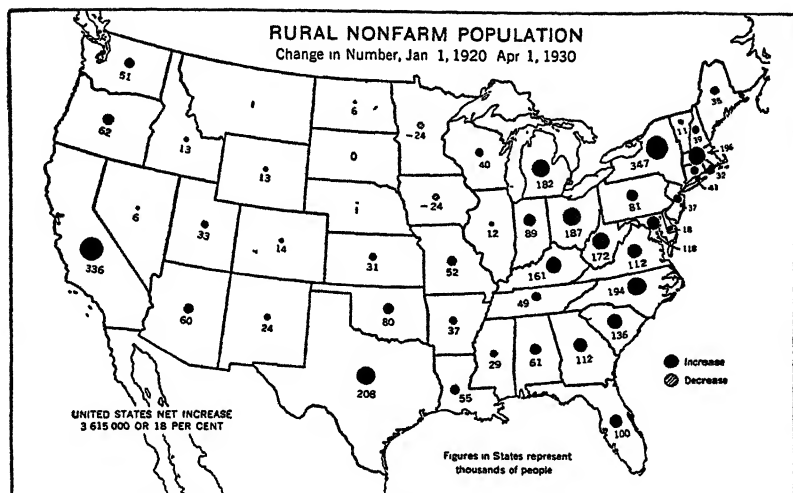
31. Urban and Rural Population of the United States, 1880 to 1930

Source: *Fifteenth Census, Population*, Vol. II, p. 9.

creased. Nearly 40 per cent of the increase of the rural non-farm population occurred in the states north of the Potomac and Ohio Rivers and east of the Mississippi. In the Southern states over 30 per cent of the increase took place, and on the Pacific Coast states some 12 per cent. In the Great Plains states there was little or no increase, and in Iowa and Minnesota an actual decrease.⁹

The heaviest loss of farm population during the decade was in Utah, Georgia, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Maryland and Maine. North of the Cotton Belt and east of the Missouri River the loss was almost universal. In North Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Alabama, the Pacific Coast states and a half

⁹ Folsom and Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 22.



32. Increase of Rural Non-Farm Population, 1920-30

dozen other western states there was some gain.¹⁰ In general the areas of loss in farm population for the decade 1920-30 roughly

Table 6

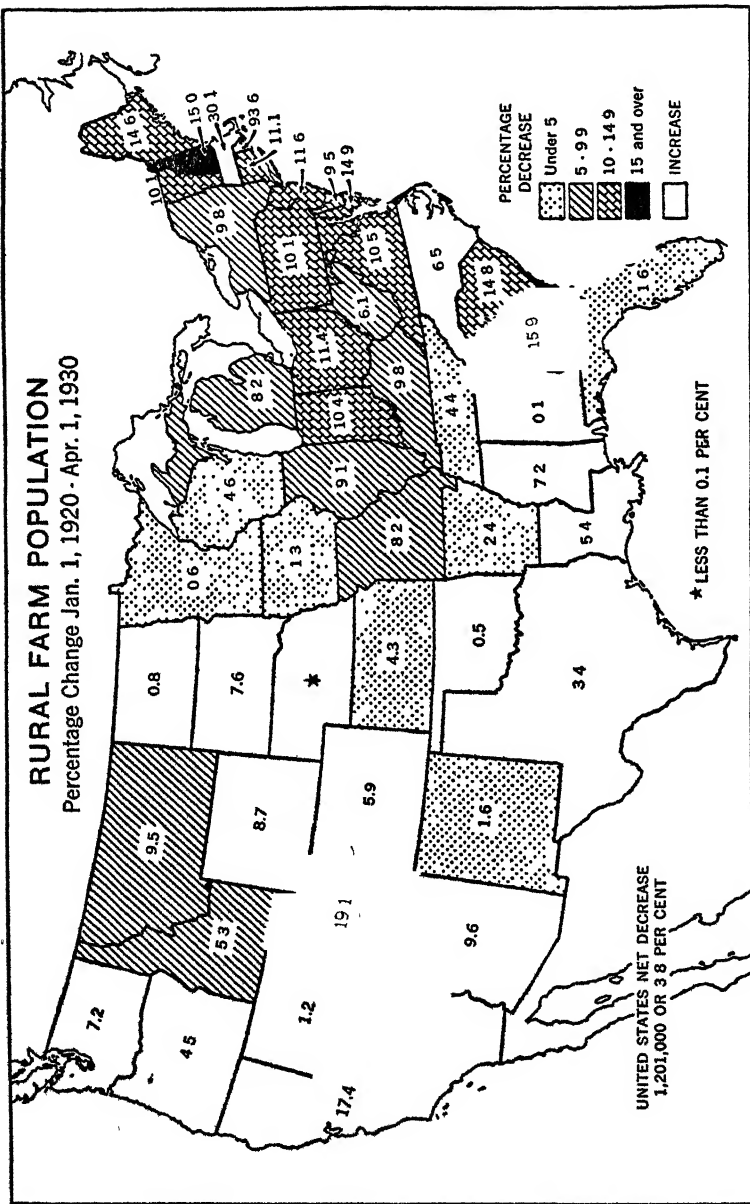
RATE OF INCREASE OF RURAL AND OF URBAN
POPULATION WITH 2,500 AS THE DIVIDING
LINE, 1880 TO 1930, TOGETHER WITH
THE RATIO BETWEEN RATES

Decade	RATE OF INCREASE OF POPULATION		Ratio of Per Cent of Increase of Urban to that of Rural
	Per Cent Urban Increase	Per Cent Rural Increase	
1920-1930	27.0	4.7	5.7
1910-1920	28.8	3.2	9.0
1900-1910	38.8	9.2	4.2
1890-1900	36.2	12.2	3.0
1880-1890	35.2	13.5	4.1

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

RURAL FARM POPULATION

Percentage Change Jan. 1, 1920 - Apr. 1, 1930



33. Decrease of Rural Farm Population, 1920-30

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, p. 22.

coincide with the areas in which the general population declined from 1880 to 1920.

Sources of Gain and Loss

The sources of gain and loss can best be determined by detailed studies of specific cases. We may cite one made of Ohio by Professor C. E. Lively.

The causes assigned for the gains and losses as analyzed are given in Table 7.

Table 7

CAUSES OF INCREASES AND DECREASES BY TOWNSHIPS TENTATIVELY ASSIGNED ^a

Causes	Number of Townships	Per Cent
Increases	315	100.0 \
Moderate shift in industrial unincorporated village and open country population	224	77.1
Expansion of cities without incorporation	63	20.0
Changes in mining population	17	5.4
Decline of seven villages formerly incorporated . .	7	2.2
Unexplained	4	7.3
Decreases	998	100.0
Moderate shift in agricultural unincorporated vil- lage and other open country population	943	94.5 .
Incorporation of 58 villages	21	2.1
Incorporation of large cities	13	1.3
Changes in mining population	9	0.9
Unexplained	12	1.2

^a C. E. Lively, *Journal of Farm Economics*, July, 1924, p. 252.

The causes operative in the state of Ohio were probably fairly applicable to most of the great agricultural states during the period indicated. Subsequently many other factors have come into play and have become increasingly effective as agencies of change. Urban prosperity during the decade of the twenties, together with a greatly reduced foreign immigration, attracted large numbers of rural young people to the cities. At the same time the low price

of farm produce and the constantly improved technique of agriculture acted as expulsive forces on the country population. In addition to these general factors, there were regional and often local ones. Soil erosion and the boll weevil, for instance, were patent influences causing the decline of farm population in several southern states.

Where there was an increase it was due to one of two factors, either a high birth rate that more than offset the loss by migration, as in parts of the South, or the influx of new settlers, as in the Pacific Coast states and in a few others west of the Mississippi River.

Since 1930 certain new causes have appeared, profoundly influencing the population problem of the country. Among them the great depression, restricting the opportunities which the cities had so long offered to country youth, sharply curtailed the rural exodus and sent a stream of migrants from the cities back to the country with the result that rural population trends were for a time reversed. In the five years 1930-1935 the number of rural youths increased by more than a million. In the light of the present indication, the future trend of the farm population promises to create greater problems than rural America has ever faced with reference to its numbers, for it is estimated that during the next 25 years agriculture will not be able to make room for more than one-fifth of the excess of births over deaths.¹¹ Since this problem thus becomes one primarily of population movement, further discussion of it will be deferred to a later chapter.

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¹¹ Carter Goodrich and others, *Migration and Economic Opportunity*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936, p. 407.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Account for the fact that the village is growing more rapidly than the farm population.
2. If agriculture will not be able to make room for more than one-fifth of its excess of births over deaths during the next 25 years and industrial opportunities do not expand, what adjustments are possible? What ones are probable?
3. Since villages tend to be old peoples' homes, what significance attaches to the fact that their growth is relatively more rapid than that of the farm population?
4. How would the development of extensive large-scale mechanized farming affect rural population density?
5. Is the farm population likely to constitute a continually decreasing proportion of the total population or will some point of stabilization be reached? Defend your answer.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL PEOPLE

Sex Distribution

THE rural population of the United States has more men than women. American agriculture is essentially a male occupation, demanding the labor of males to a greater degree than of females, especially for hired labor on the farms.

Urban occupations offer better opportunities than do rural for women undertaking self-support; hence many gravitate to the cities—particularly the residential and textile manufacturing ones. In metal working and commercial centers we find more men. However, the demands of the various types of cities so check against one another as to give practically an equal number of men and women in the whole urban area. This is indicated in Table 8.

There are some interesting facts relative to rural villages available from studies made by The Institute of Social and Religious Research. In 1920 thirty-four villages in the Middle Atlantic States showed 88 males to 100 females, as compared with 111 males to 100 females on farms, and 96 males to 100 females in the selected cities of that section. Forty-four Southern villages showed 94.3 males to 100 females, compared with 93.6 males to 100 females for ten selected cities of the Southern section. In 65 Middle Western villages there were 95 males to 100 females, whereas the farms showed a ratio of 113 to 100 and ten cities a ratio of 99 to 100. The 34 villages of the Far West showed 105 males to 100 females, as compared with 107.7 males to 100 females in eight cities of that region. Thus in all sections, save the Far Western, there is a marked disparity between the numbers of the sexes in the villages. A recanvass of these data in the light of the 1930 census reveals

Table 8

SEX DISTRIBUTION BY MAJOR DIVISIONS, 1930

DIVISION	MALES PER 100 FEMALES				
	Total Popula- tion	Farm Popula- tion	Rural Popula- tion	Village Popula- tion	Urban Popula- tion
United States	102.5	111.0	108.2	105.0	98.1
New England	97.2	115.5	104.9	101.3	95.0
Middle Atlantic . . .	100.9	115.0	107.2	104.3	99.1
East North Central .	104.1	115.2	110.5	105.6	101.1
West North Central .	104.2	116.1	110.8	101.4	95.7
South Atlantic	99.6	104.8	103.7	102.4	92.6
East South Central .	100.2	104.9	103.2	100.3	92.0
West South Central .	103.3	109.0	107.4	104.2	96.4
Mountain	111.3	121.2	118.6	116.2	100.8
Pacific	108.7	127.9	124.7	122.6	101.8

greater variation from region to region than at the earlier date. However, the ratio of males to females in these villages as a whole was a point and a half lower than in 1920.¹ The outstanding characteristic of the villages insofar as sex distribution is concerned is that they are neither urban nor rural, but in a class by themselves.

The masculine character of rural society holds with respect to every age group as well as each color and nativity class. The sum total excess of males over females for 1930 aggregated 2,144,417.

Age Distribution

Altho rural society is unbalanced insofar as the numbers of the sexes are concerned, it is more normal than urban as regards its age groups.

An inspection of Table 9 will reveal that in the age groups up to twenty-one years the farms in particular and the rural group in general have a greater number than the urban districts. This holds true for every section of the country except New England.

One hundred thousand urban dwellers compared with 100,000

¹ Brunner & Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

rural people would show the numbers in each age group as indicated in Table 10.

Table 10

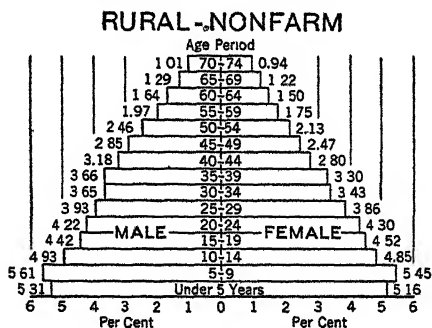
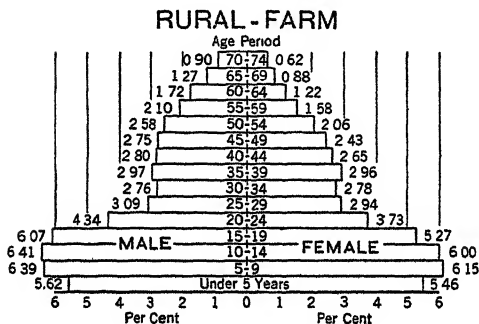
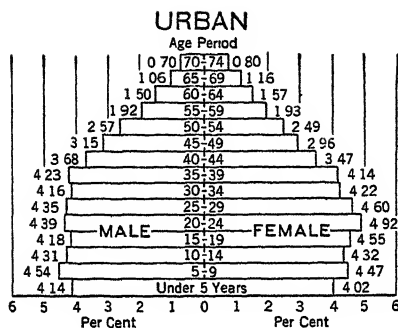
NUMBER IN EACH AGE GROUP OF 100,000
OF FARM, RURAL, VILLAGE, AND
URBAN PEOPLE

Age Group	Farm	Rural	Village	Urban
Under 5 Years	11,100	10,800	10,500	8,200
5-9 Years	12,500	11,800	11,100	9,000
10-14 Years	12,400	11,200	9,800	8,600
15-19 Years	11,300	10,200	8,900	8,700
20-45 Years	31,000	33,300	36,300	42,000
45 Years and Over . . .	21,600	22,300	23,400	23,000
Age Unknown	100	400	100	100

This difference between city and country in age grouping is not peculiar to America. It is more or less typical, I take it, of the western nations generally. In Germany, for example, there is a situation analogous to our own.

Even tho the urban districts had more than half the total population of our nation in 1920, the country districts claimed an excess of nearly two and a third million children under ten years of age, and a total excess of children and youth under twenty years of over four millions. In 1930 these figures were radically different. The rural excess of children under ten years had fallen to 370,000 and of those under twenty years to less than 3,800. However, the rural-farm youth group, 15-24 years of age, increased about 2 per cent during the decade. After 1930 the flow of youth to the cities was checked by the depression, hence a marked increase. By 1935, it is estimated that the number in rural territory had risen over 1930 by 1,150,000. Within the same period the cities lost 450,000 youth.² If this "piling up" of youth in rural territory continues, it will tend to make the age distribution of the urban and rural populations more nearly equal.

² B. L. Melvin and E. N. Smith, "Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects," Works Progress Administration, Division of Social Research, *Research Monograph XV*, 1938, pp. 7, 15-16.



- 34- Population of the United States in the Several Age and Sex Groups by Class (Urban, Farm, and Rural Non-Farm), 1930

Source: *Fifteenth Census*, Population, Vol. II, p. 574

Taking the farm population alone, the 1930 census showed 23.6 per cent were children under ten years of age, as compared with 25.7 per cent for 1920. Comparing the 30,000,000 farm people with an equal number in our cities, there would be nearly 2,000,000 more children among the farmers. This means a 6.4 per cent excess of non-producers in the country, a heavier burden of dependency for the average farm family, and a greater educational load for the rural community.

The study of villages above referred to discloses the very interesting fact that in those of the Middle Atlantic region there is a preponderance of elderly people. Only one-third of the men and women are between the ages of 20 and 45, while over one-third are 45 or more.

In the cities of this section four persons out of every ten are between 20 and 45, while only one-fourth are over 45.³ The villages of the Middle West show much the same conditions. They average 30 per cent in the group 45 or more, in comparison with an average of 23.5 per cent in this group for the cities.⁴ In the Southern villages the age distribution is normal, that is, about the same as for the population of the United States as a whole. In the Far West the villages show a slight excess of the elderly group.⁵ A restudy of these villages after the 1930 census revealed increasing proportions of elderly people in every region. They had increased during the decade more rapidly than the total population. Thus agricultural villages are properly called "the old people's home of rural America."⁶

There are outstanding differences in the age distribution as between the foreign-born group and the general rural population. But the foreign-born do not show any great difference in age grouping as between urban and rural except in two cases. There is a preponderance of urban dwellers in the class 20-44 years of age and a preponderance of rural dwellers in the class 45 years and over.

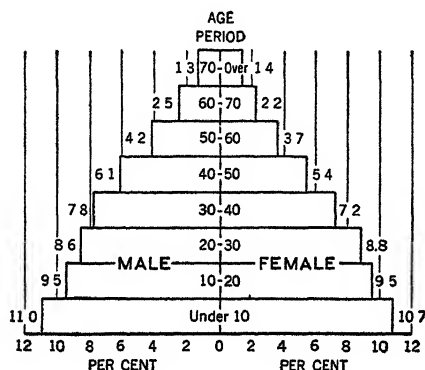
³ *American Village Studies*, Part I, pp. 4-5; *A Census Analysis of Middle Atlantic Villages*, by C. Luther Fry, Institute of Social and Religious Research.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Part III, p. 70.

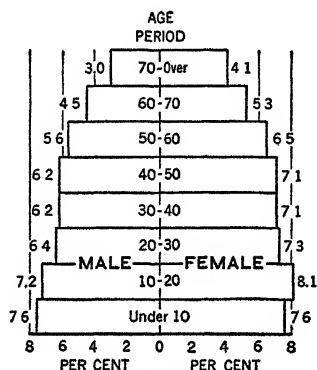
⁵ *Ibid.*, Part IV, p. 125.

⁶ Brunner & Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

The significant difference between the urban and rural population in general as regards age lies in the fact that the former is a more dynamic and hopeful group because it is more largely composed of those in the productive years of life. The rural group, with more children and aged, tends to be more deliberate, cautious



U. S. A.



VILLAGES

35. Age and Sex Distribution of the Population of the 34 Villages of the Middle Atlantic States and of the United States

Source. *Fifteenth Census*, Population, Part I, p. 7. Reproduced by permission of the Institute of Social and Religious Research.

and conservative, as is natural where more dependents are involved.

Moreover, the age and sex composition and its trend in the village part of the rural population may have significance as indicating the coming of the stabilized community. At least it is in the village that a more rapid approach to the sort of population that is being predicted for America is clearly manifest.⁷

Ethnic Elements

The ethnic and national composition of the rural population is an important factor in the rural situation. From the standpoint of primary races, the rural group is more heterogeneous than the

⁷ Brunner & Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

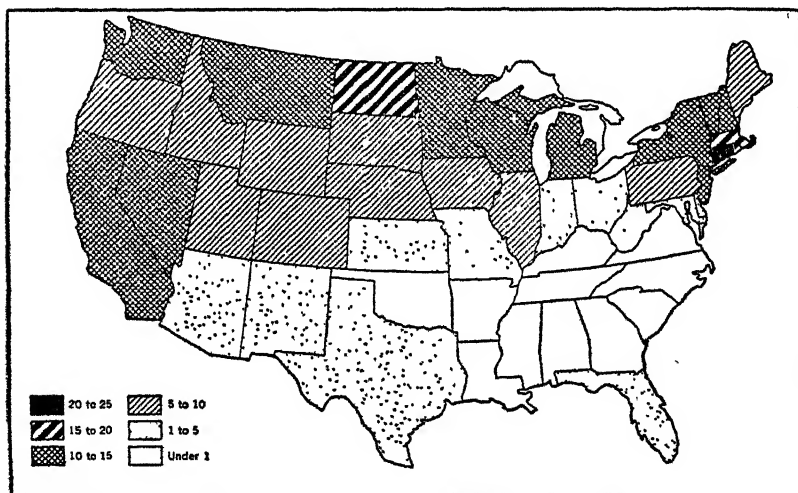
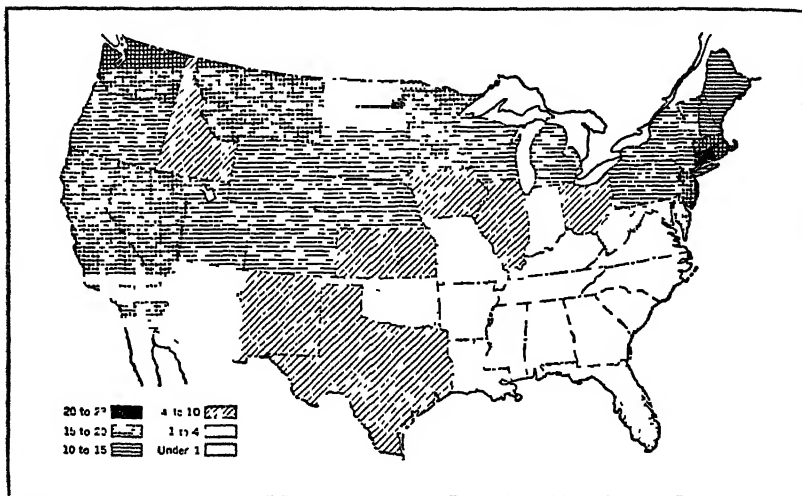
urban, for, as will be observed by consulting Table 11, nearly one-sixth of the farm dwellers were Negroes, whereas but 7.5 per cent of the urban group were so classified in 1930. The colored races, being chiefly composed of Negroes, are largely localized in the South. In this section fully one-fifth of the farms are occupied by Negroes. In 1930 there were 925,708 Negro farm owners, managers, and tenants, representing a total of 4,680,523 persons. Of these 4,608,786 were found in the three southern divisions of states. The remainder of the colored farm population to the number of 592,156, composed of Mexicans, Indians, Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese, Hindus, etc., were scattered thruout the country but mainly in the Western states. In 1930 the rural non-farm Negroes numbered 2,016,707 and the other colored races 503,235. The latter, both in the farm and the rural non-farm classes, showed heavy increases over 1920. This was due chiefly to the influx of Mexicans.

Table 11

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS ELEMENTS
IN THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED
STATES WITH RESPECT TO COLOR
AND NATIVITY, 1930

Class	Total Popu- lation	Farm Popu- lation	Rural Popu- lation	Village Popu- lation	Urban Popu- lation
White	88.7	82.5	85.5	89.4	91.1
White, Native	77.7	78.9	80.6	82.8	75.6
White, Native Parentage ..	57.1	68.0	68.1	68.2	48.6
Native-born White of Foreign Parentage ..	13.8	6.5	7.5	8.8	18.8
Native-born White of Mixed Parentage ...	6.8	4.5	5.0	5.7	8.2
Foreign-born White ...	10.9	3.6	4.9	6.6	15.6
Negro	9.7	15.5	12.4	8.5	7.5
All other colored	1.6	2.0	2.0	2.1	1.3

The foreign-born white stock in rural America is not large, being about one-third as numerous as the colored population. In 1930



36. Per Cent Rural Population, Foreign-Born White, 1920 and 1930

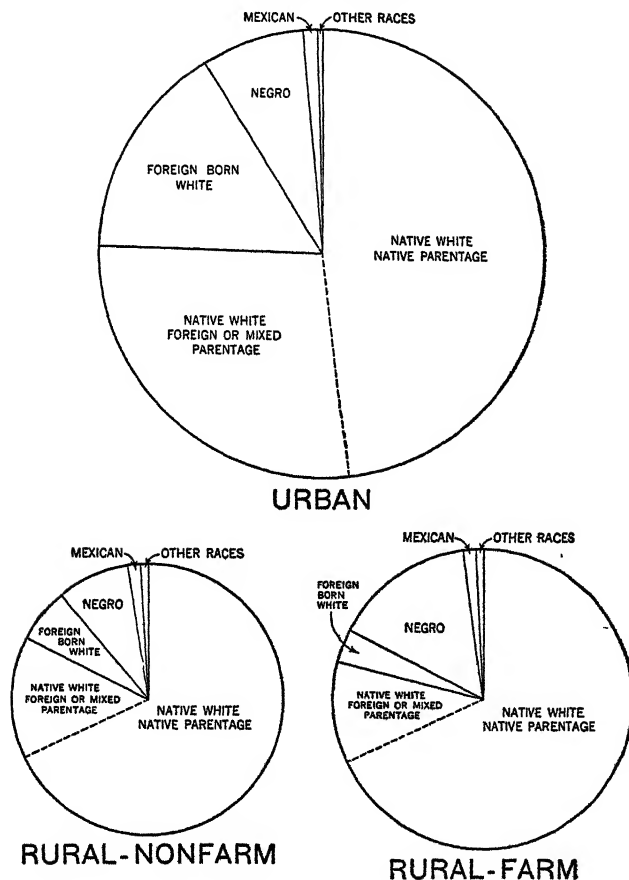
the foreign-born whites constituted but 4.9 per cent of the total rural population and but 3.6 per cent of the actual farm group. If, however, the American-born children of the foreign stock are included, then 17.4 per cent of the rural population must be classi-

fied as of foreign origin. However, only 14.6 per cent of the farm dwellers are of foreign origin. Figure 36 above shows the distribution of the foreign-born rural stock.

As will be observed by consulting Figure 36, the stock of foreign birth is on the whole most numerous in the states along our northern border and the Pacific coast. When those of foreign-born parentage also are counted, the following results are obtained: Washington has 38.4 per cent of its rural population composed of this element; Montana, 41.5; North Dakota, 62.4; South Dakota, 43.4; Minnesota, 46.1; Wisconsin, 54.2, and Michigan, 39.3. The Mountain and Pacific sections average high, as do also New England and the Middle Atlantic states. In all cases, however, there was a marked decrease of the percentage of this stock in the decade 1920-1930. In the Southern divisions this element is almost negligible; and one is impressed with the high degree of ethnic homogeneity of the Southern whites in contrast to the marked ethnic heterogeneity of the white stock of the Northern states.

When the ethnic composition of the rural foreign stock is taken into account, this heterogeneity is not so important as one is inclined to think before making a careful analysis. Over 60 per cent of this stock originated in northwest Europe. It is from the British Isles, the Scandinavian Peninsula, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, Switzerland, and France. This means that it derives in general from the same sources as the bulk of the stock that originally settled America. The racial elements in rural America that are not of this original source constitute less than 6 per cent of the white population. Thus, better than 90 per cent of the white rural stock seems to be of one common blood. And 80 per cent of it may be said to be old American stock, for the total white group of foreign extraction is only 17.4 per cent of the whole. Incidentally, this situation presents a bold contrast to conditions prevailing in urban society, where less than one-half of the population is native white of native parentage and still fewer are the scions of the original stock that pioneered America.

To those who are wont to put much store by race as a societal



37. Distribution of the Urban, Rural-Farm, and Rural Non-Farm Population by Color and Nativity, 1930

Source: *Fifteenth Census, Population, Vol. II, p. 30.*

factor, these facts will be full of meaning. Those racial dogmatists especially who are suffering from a Nordic complex will see the hope of American civilization in its rural stock. But to those who have not become obsessed with the Nordic myth, no particular significance will be attached to the facts pointed out, for it is assumed that the race factor is of little sociological importance unless

it chances to be a barrier to cultural assimilation. As a matter of fact, assimilation seems to take place more easily and effectively in the country than in the city. Contacts are freer and more natural in rural society. There is more participation in the vital things of community life, less segregation and less insulation of groups than under urban conditions.⁸ There would consequently appear to be less ground for racial discrimination among farmers than among city dwellers.

The evidence is clear that the old American stock was not preponderantly Nordic according to any of the standards of Nordicism that have been set up. In the first place, there are no pure races in Europe. Northwest Europe is peculiarly mongrel as the result of thousands of years of stock mixing. Most mixed of all are the British Isles. Especially do those sections of England whence came the early colonists show an extremely hybrid population.⁹ In the second place, the old Americans are now and were originally a mongrel lot as far removed from any pure racial strain as were their English forebears.¹⁰ There is absolutely nothing from the standpoint of race purity to boast of in the old Americans. If there is any ground at all for pride, it lies in the fact that they were the most mongrelized of folks, for clearly such stocks are the ones that are and have always been the most fecund of culture and talent.

Vitality of the Rural People

The physical vigor and stamina or general vitality of any group is a sociological factor of primary importance. This can be measured by fecundity, mortality, and morbidity rates, and by other manifestations of physical energy.

Birth and death rates and the excess of one over the other afford one method of determining the vitality.

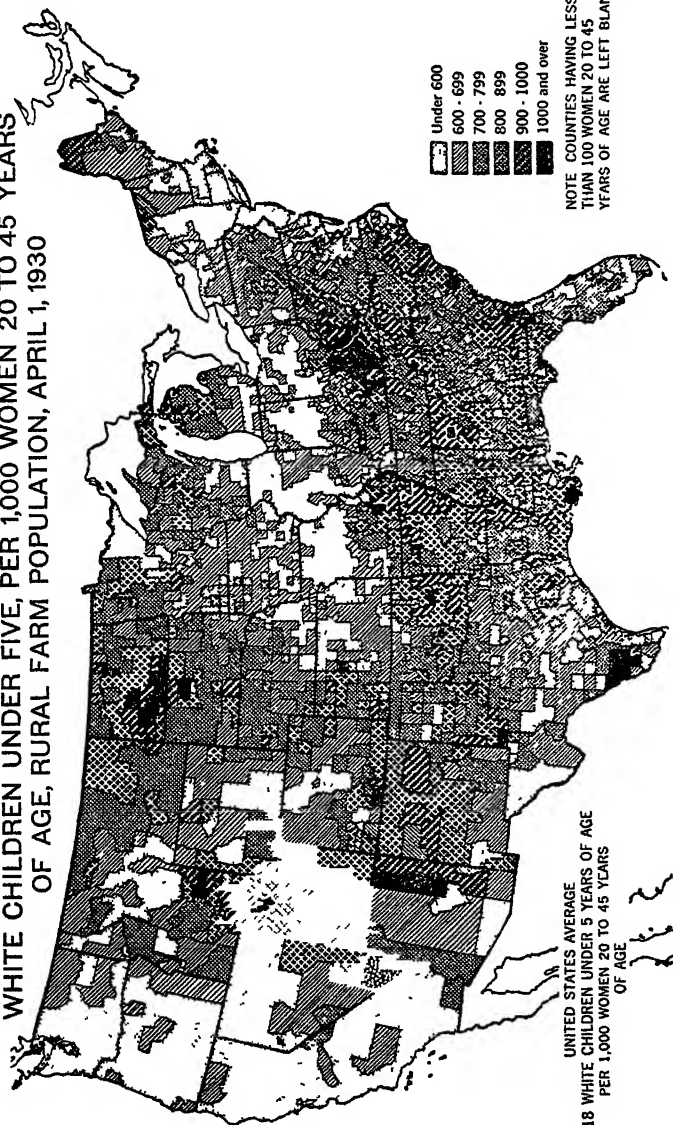
The rate of natural increase of the rural population, both non-

⁸ Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children*, p. 35 ff.

⁹ F. G. Parsons, "The Color Index of the British Isles," *Jour. Roy. Anth. Inst.*, Vol. 50, 1920, pp. 159-183.

¹⁰ Ales Hrdlička, *The Old Americans*, Baltimore, 1925.

WHITE CHILDREN UNDER FIVE, PER 1,000 WOMEN 20 TO 45 YEARS
OF AGE, RURAL FARM POPULATION, APRIL 1, 1930



Under 600
600 - 699
700 - 799
800 - 899
900 - 1000
1000 and over

UNITED STATES AVERAGE
718 WHITE CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE
PER 1,000 WOMEN 20 TO 45 YEARS
OF AGE

NOTE: COUNTIES HAVING LESS
THAN 100 WOMEN 20 TO 45
YEARS OF AGE ARE LEFT BLANK

38. White Children Under Five, per 1,000 Women 20 to 45 Years of Age, Rural Farm Population, 1930

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, Nov., 1935.

farm and farm, has always been high compared with that of the urban population. The ratio of the rural to the urban seems to have been about 2 to 1 until the census period, 1920-1930, when it apparently fell to $1\frac{1}{2}$ or $1\frac{2}{3}$ to 1.

The relative fecundity of the rural and urban populations at the present time may be seen by consulting Tables 13 and 14. In Table 14 will be seen the rural fertility ratios by counties for the United States. It will be noted that in 1930 only 36 counties had a ratio lower than 440, which is high enough to assure a growing population. Recent studies of population trends have disclosed the fact that the highest ratios on farms are in the poorest farming districts, the Cotton Belt, the Appalachian Mountain Region, the Cut-Over Region of the Great Lakes, and the drought sections—which areas embrace the poorest tenth of the counties of America. In these counties the problem of rural relief is greatest and the proportion of children in the families on relief is higher than in the rest of the rural population. In the richest farming sections of New England, the Pacific Coast, and the Central States a relatively low fertility rate prevails. There are, in fact, sections of the Northeast where the farm population is not replacing itself.¹¹

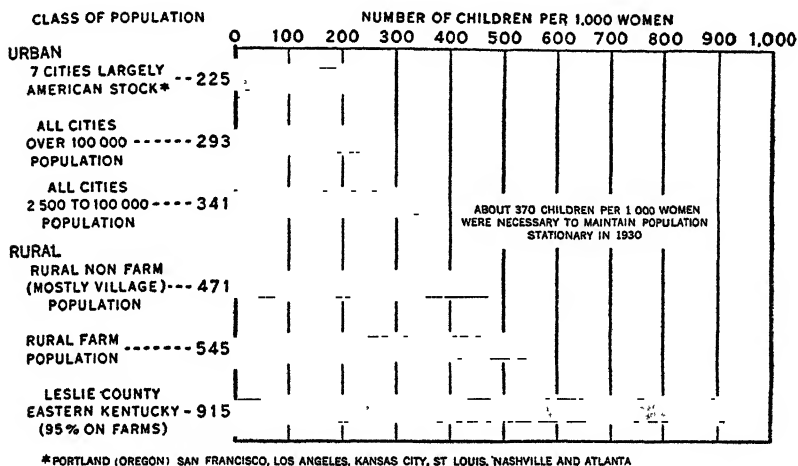
It will be noted that the rate of fertility runs generally higher for the rural-farm than for the rural non-farm population.

When the rural ratios are compared with the urban as in Table 14, the superior vitality of the rural population as measured by fertility becomes apparent. It will be observed that the number of children under 5 years of age steadily decreases from the farm to the large cities. O. E. Baker estimates that about 370 children under 5 years of age to every 1,000 women 15 to 45 are needed to maintain a stationary population on the basis of the 1930 expectation of life in the United States. By that standard he finds that cities of over 100,000 population fall short by 20 per cent and the smaller cities by 7 per cent, while the rural non-farm popula-

¹¹ T. J. Woofter, Jr., and Ellen Winston, *Seven Lean Years*, The University of North Carolina Press, 1939, pp. 34-35.

tion has a surplus of over 25 per cent and the farm population an excess of 50 per cent.¹²

Stated in a more striking manner, the cities of 100,000 and over are producing only about 7 children per 10 adults. At this rate, the second generation will have 5 children and the third 3.5, thus causing the population to decline in a century by about two-



39. Number of Children Under 5 years of Age per 1,000 Women 15 to 45 Years of Age in United States, April 1, 1930

Source: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

thirds. In contrast, 10 farm adults are now raising 14 children. If they continue at this rate—which is not at all probable—the second generation will produce 20 children and the third 27, with the result that in a century there will be two and a half times as large a farm population as now, provided, of course, all remain in the country. In other words, 1,000 of the farm population is likely to have from 3 to 7 times as many descendants in a century

¹² O. E. Baker and J. C. Folsom, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," United States Dept. of Agriculture, *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, November, 1937, p. 17.

as are 1,000 city dwellers. It will be three times the number if the predepression exodus of farm youth to the cities takes place, and seven times as many if the youth remain on the farms.¹³

The difference in fecundity of the rural and the urban population is not likely to remain so great, since the rural birth rate is on the decline. The President's Research Committee on Social Trends compared the percentage of children under ten years of age in eighteen medium-sized cities scattered thruout the United States with that in the four tiers of counties lying about each of these centers, and found it increased with the distance from the city. On the average^c in the city-county there were 17.7 children in the total population and 21 in the rural for each 100 persons. This number rose with each tier until in the fourth it reached 21.6 for the total and 22.3 for the rural. However, the farm and the rural

Table 13

COUNTIES OF THE UNITED STATES BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN * UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE PER 1,000 WOMEN 20 THROUGH 44 YEARS OF AGE IN THE RURAL POPULATION, BY COLOR AND RESIDENCE, 1930^b

Children Under 5 per 1,000 Women 20-44	Total		WHITE				COLORED			
			Rural-farm		Rural-nonfarm		Rural-farm		Rural-nonfarm	
	Number	Per Cent								
Classified counties ...	3,052	100.0	2,982	100.0	2,978	100.0	903	100.0	935	100.0
Fewer than 440 .	36	1.2	41	1.4	292	9.8	5	0.6	182	19.5
440-549	478	15.7	303	10.2	1,027	34.4	19	2.1	204	21.8
550-659	923	30.2	794	26.6	886	29.8	67	7.4	209	22.3
660-769	837	27.4	800	26.8	449	15.1	151	16.7	157	16.8
770-879	560	18.3	647	21.7	216	7.3	274	30.4	59	6.3
880-989	173	5.7	298	10.0	80	2.7	225	24.9	54	5.8
990-1,099	34	1.1	69	2.3	23	0.7	116	12.8	44	4.7
1,100 or more ..	11	0.4	30	1.0	5	0.2	46	5.1	26	2.8
Unclassified counties ^c ..	7	—	77	—	81	—	2,156	—	2,124	—

* Number not corrected for underenumeration.

^b C. E. Lively and Conrad Taeuber, "Rural Migration in the United States," P. A. Research Monograph XIX, 1939.

^c Counties with fewer than 100 women 20-44 years of age and of the specified color.

^d C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," U.S.D.A. Miscellaneous Publication No. 265, Nov., 1937, p. 36.

Source. Unpublished data from the Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

¹³ *Ibid.*

non-farm elements were different; the rise was steady for the farm group from 20.7 to 23.0, but in the rural non-farm group there was no particular difference between the tiers beyond the city-county.¹⁴

Table 14

SHOWING RATIO OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS TO 1,000
WOMEN 20-44 YEARS, BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY
AND RACE, 1920-1930^a

SIZE OF COMMUNITY	TOTAL POPULATION		WHITES		NEGROES	
	1920	1930	1920	1930	1920	1930
500,000 and Over ..	443	343	455	347	242	295
250,000-500,000 ..	381	330	393	335	264	298
100,000-250,000 ..	429	378	449	384	271	322
25,000-100,000 ...	457	386	472	393	294	317
2,500-25,000	507	436	521	442	356	364
Rural	744	660	744	653	743	707
Farm	806	730	802	718	826	794
Non-Farm	656	584	669	589	548	543

^a Compiled from Thompson and Whelpton, *Population Trends in the United States*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933, p. 279.

It was discovered that the fecundity rate had declined sharply from 1910 to 1930. In the most remote tier of counties the decline was more rapid than in the city county or the tiers nearer to it, and more marked for the total population than for the rural. For the total population the rate of decline ranged from 9.5 per cent in the city county thru 10.4 to 12.4 in the intermediate tiers to 19.6 in the fourth tier. For the rural population it began with 10.6 per cent decline in the city county and ran from 8.7 to 9.7 in the intermediate tiers but reached 17.7 per cent in the fourth tier. Apparently the birth-control wave swept over the nearer counties somewhat earlier and is now affecting the remoter ones. This would seem to suggest that the country is tending to approach the city behavior pattern in its birth rate.¹⁵

A more recent study in certain rural areas of North Carolina

¹⁴ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 111 ff.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

shows the decline of the fertility since 1915 to have been from 30 to 35 per cent.¹⁶

The high rate of natural increase of the rural population is largely due to the social, cultural, and economic conditions in the country rather than to any inherent superiority of the rural over the urban stock. The family has been a stronger institution in the country than in the city. Children have, at least until of late, been a great asset in agriculture, whereas too often they have been considered a liability by the upper and pushing-up classes of the city. Birth control therefore became a city practice long before it was considered in most rural areas. However, changing conditions in the country, along with the wide dissemination of contraceptive knowledge, is leading the rural population to put a check on its reproductivity.

An illuminating set of facts showing how rural and urban dwellers compare with respect to physical defects and general stamina was gathered by the draft boards from the examination of recruits in the World War. In Table 15, which is taken from the report of the Provost Marshal to the Secretary of War, a comparison is made of rejections among rural and urban recruits.

The urban group was selected from boards in large cities, viz.: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Seattle, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and New Orleans. The rural group was chosen from boards scattered thruout all the states where the number of registrants was less than 1,200. The results as indicated by the table show a difference of nearly 5 per cent in favor of the rural.

The urban rate of defects was 609 per 1,000; the rural, 528 per 1,000 among the men in the age group 21-31 years. One or two points may be specified. Obesity, for instance, was found to prevail in 2.37 cases to 1,000 of the urban recruits as compared with 1.49 per 1,000 cases among rural. Underweight for the city showed 31.3 per 1,000 and for the country 23.8.

¹⁶ C. H. Hamilton and Marguerite York, "Trends in the Fertility of Married Women of Different Social Groups in Certain Rural Areas of North Carolina," *Rural Sociology*, June, 1937, pp. 192-203.

A further study of the disqualifying defects among 45,000 rejects was made for eight urban and eight rural districts. Table 16, adapted from these data, gives the average per cent rejected for each cause.

Out of the nineteen causes of rejection, the urban group exceeded the rural in ten and the rural made a worse showing than the urban in nine. The most striking difference is seen in the matter of developmental defects, where the superiority of the rural recruits is manifest. However, this advantage is practically offset by a better showing of the urban recruits as regards bones and joints. Other significant differences in favor of the rural group pertain to condition of eyes, ears, feet, etc., whereas the urban group is favored as regards the digestive tract, heart and blood vessels, teeth, thyroid, respiratory, and mental condition. On the

Table 15

RURAL AND URBAN PHYSICAL REJECTIONS COMPARED ^a

Rural and Urban Physical Rejections Compared	Number	Per Cent of Examined
Total examined in 100 selected urban and rural regions	200,000	....
Rejected in 100 selected urban and rural regions	38,569	19.28
Examined in urban regions	100,000	....
Rejected in urban regions	21,675	21.68
Examined in rural regions	100,000	....
Rejected in rural regions	16,894	16.89

^a Second Report of Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System to December 21, 1918, p. 159.

whole, the Provost Marshal's conclusion that "the figures of both these studies indicate that a considerable physical advantage accrues to the boy reared in the country," seems fairly justified.¹⁷

However, the Surgeon General expressed the opinion that the difference between city and country draftees was probably more

¹⁷ Second Report of Provost Marshal General, etc., *op. cit.*, p. 159.

Table 16

CAUSES FOR PHYSICAL REJECTIONS IN URBAN
AND RURAL DISTRICTS COMPARED ^a

Disqualifying Defects	Urban	Rural
	Districts Average Per Cent	Districts Average Per Cent
Total	100	100
1. Alcohol and Drugs	1.9	0.6
2. Bones and Joints	8.9	10.9
3. Developmental	9.7	6.3
4. Digestive System	0.2	0.3
5. Ears	5.8	4.4
6. Eyes	10.9	9.0
7. Flat Foot	9.3	7.4
8. Genito-urinary (venereal)	1.4	1.1
9. Genito-urinary (non-venereal)	1.2	1.5
10. Heart and Blood Vessels	8.9	10.4
11. Hernia	10.1	9.6
12. Mental Deficiency	1.5	3.9
13. Nervous and Mental Disorders	4.6	4.2
14. Respiratory (tuberculosis)	5.6	5.3
15. Respiratory (non-tuberculosis)	1.8	2.4
16. Skin	0.1	0.2
17. Teeth	5.9	6.7
18. Thyroid	2.0	3.4
19. Tuberculosis (non-respiratory)	0.1	0.1
20. Other Defects	0.7	0.5
21. Defects Not Stated	9.2	11.9

^a *Bulletin No. 11*, Office of Surgeon General: Physical Examination of the First Million Draft Recruits; Methods and Results, p. 18.

apparent than real, since there was probably a more thoro examination given to the city recruits than to those in rural districts.¹⁸ This may indeed be so, but there are just as strong if not stronger reasons for thinking the figures comparable, and that they reflect the true situation in the differences indicated. In the first place, there was probably less haste in the examinations given in the rural than in the urban district, for there was less pressure upon

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

the examining physicians from numbers to be examined. And, tho the examiners may have been somewhat more competent in the urban than in the rural districts, it is reasonable to believe that the probability of greater care in examination in the rural districts tended to compensate for other shortcomings. In the second place, there is good ground for accepting the findings at their face value, inasmuch as they are in substantial agreement with the findings of the German army with respect to its recruits. In the years before the war it was found that the larger the city, the smaller the per cent of recruits able to pass the examinations, while the country districts showed the lowest per cent of rejections.¹⁹ Whether this was true of every year, I have not determined, but the years consulted seem to be typical and indicative of the trend. Thus it seems reasonable to accept the figures showing that our rural recruits were physically fitter than the urban as correctly representing the situation.

Another source of light on the relative vigor of rural and urban dwellers is found in the study of children. A few years ago the National Council of Education made an extensive investigation of the health and physical condition of school children. From the statistics gathered, the percentages of defects for urban and rural children were obtained. These appear in Table 17.

If the figures of this table give a true picture of the situation, country children are markedly inferior in physical condition to city children. In fact, in many cases the defects are from 2 to 4 times as great and on the average they mount up close to double. However, these often-quoted data are largely fictitious. They have been discredited and refuted by many other studies.²⁰ Doubt is at once cast upon them by the findings of the army examination. Moreover, Taliaferro Clark, of the Public Health Service, reviewed numerous studies of city and country school children and found fewer refractive defects in country than in city children.²¹

¹⁹ R. H. Gault, *Social Psychology*, p. 288.

²⁰ Sorokin, Zimmerman & Galpin, *Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology*, Vol. III, pp. 59-ff.

²¹ Taliaferro Clark, "The Need and Opportunity for Physical Education in Rural Communities," *American Physical Education Review*, Vol. 24, No. 8 (Nov., 1919).

A number of other investigations involving upwards of two million children yield data which justify the conclusion that there is no positive difference, or, if any, it favors the rural child. If such differences as Wood's table indicates really existed, it would be difficult to account for the change reversing the positions of the

Table 17

SHOWING PER CENT OF DEFECTS, URBAN AND
RURAL CHILDREN ^a

Type of Defect	PER CENT OF CHILDREN	
	Rural	Urban
Mental	0.8	0.2
Heart Disease	0.74	0.40
Lung Disease	1.25	0.32
Unclean	1.7	0.17
Anemia	1.65	1.5
Spinal Curvature	3.5	0.13
Breathing Defects	4.2	2.1
Ear Defects	4.78	1.28
Enlarged Glands	6.4	2.7
Malnutrition	16.6	7.65
Eye Defects	21.0	13.4
Adenoids	23.4	12.5
Tonsils	28.14	16.42
Teeth Defects	48.8	33.58

^a Data adapted from Chart of New York State Department of Health prepared by Dr. Thomas D. Wood and based on reports of communities of over 500,000 school children in 1918.

urban and rural groups between childhood and maturity. If the data are not wrong, then the explanation of the change must be sought either in the influence of environment or a selective death rate. We are reasonably certain that the death rate is lower for the country than for the city for the particular age groups involved.

Hence the change is hardly due to a more rigid weeding out of the defectives in rural districts. Then it must be the country has a better environment for outgrowing the defects of childhood, unless

it be that the city has a worse environment for inducing defects in manhood.

Emmet's study of disability among forty-two occupational groups in an insurance company found the average annual number of days lost by the disabled in all occupations to be 27.6, while for the farmers it was but 25.78.²² Sanderson's survey in Courtland County, New York, with the data equilibrated for age as between village and open-country, revealed 4.14 days sickness per capita per annum for villagers, and 3.61 for farmers.²³ Lively and Beck found in a sample study of 200 farm families in Ross County, Ohio, that 43 per cent of the 884 individuals involved had been ill during the year.²⁴

The Committee on the Cost of Medical Care studied illness in about 9,000 families for a 12-month period. The families resided in 18 states, including both urban and rural districts. The rates for all ages, adjusted to equalize the differences in age distribution, showed but little variation between three types of areas. The following summarizes the findings:

Table 18

ANNUAL ILLNESS RATE IN VARIOUS SIZES OF COMMUNITIES ^a

Size of Community	Annual Illness Rate per Person
Cities of 100,000 and over	0.79
Cities of 5,000 to 100,000	0.83
Towns with less than 5,000 and rural areas	0.83

^a I. S. Falk, C. R. Rorem and M. D. Ring, *The Cost of Medical Care* (No. 27), The University of Chicago Press, 1933, p. 42.

Another study made by the United States Public Health Service involved the observation of 47,575 individuals for 12 months in

²² Boris Emmet, *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. IX, pp. 33-39.

²³ Dwight Sanderson, "A Survey of Sickness in Rural Areas in Courtland County, New York." Cornell U. Agr. Exp. Station, March, 1928, pp. 11-13.

²⁴ C. E. Lively & P. G. Beck, "The Rural Health Facilities of Ross County, Ohio." Ohio Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 412*, October, 1927, p. 31.

130 localities scattered thruout the country. The findings are reported as the number of cases of illness per 1,000 person-years exposure by sex in different sized communities. The standardized rates are as indicated in Table 19.

Table 19

RATES OF ILLNESS IN DIFFERENT SIZED COMMUNITIES ^a

	BOTH SEXES		MALE		FEMALE	
	All Cases	Disabling Cases	All Cases	Disabling Cases	All Cases	Disabling Cases
All Communities ..	856	532	776	485	935	528
Rural (open country)	771	467	715	435	834	504
Less than 5,000 population	937	578	864	530	1,004	620
5,000-99,999 population	909	578	833	531	967	624
100,000 or more population	803	502	708	446	888	552

^a H. F. Dorn, "The Relative Amount of Ill-Health in Rural and Urban Communities," *Reprint No. 1957 Public Health Reports*, Vol. 53, No. 28, July, 1938.

These data indicate a lower rate for the open country population than for other groups. Apart from the open country it is interesting to note how the rate increases as the size of the community decreases until the villages and towns under 5,000 show the most ill-health. If these data correctly represent the situation, the small town population must either be less fit or else health conditions are less favorable in such communities than in the open country or larger cities.

What a complete canvass of America would disclose regarding tendencies to morbidity is an open question. However, there are good *a priori* grounds for thinking that the rural population would not show up at a disadvantage in comparison with the urban. Still, in army camps infectious diseases were not so readily resisted by rural as by urban recruits. This was noticeably true with respect to measles, mumps, pneumonia, cerebrospinal meningitis, influenza

and scarlet fever. This difference between camps of urban and rural recruits may have significance and it may not, for many factors enter in. If the difference really exists, the explanation is probably to be found in the fact that city recruits are more likely to have been exposed to such diseases than are those from isolated rural areas. Those unable to resist would tend to be more effectively eliminated in childhood and those surviving to acquire immunity; and thus the city recruits would make a more favorable showing.²⁵

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Topics for Discussion

1. If large-scale mechanized agriculture should become general, how would it affect the composition of the farm population?
2. Compare the city, village, and farm population pyramids and present the sociological situation and problems disclosed by each.

²⁵ Love and Davenport, *Archives Internal Medicine*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 129-153.

3. What would happen to our cities, which are not reproducing themselves, if the rural population ceased to produce surplus numbers?
4. Do farmers today consider many children as much of an asset as did farmers of a generation ago? Why?
5. Will the average age of village populations tend to rise or fall in the next few decades? Why?
6. To what is the superior stamina of the rural population likely due, to diet, conditions of living, occupation, ethnic type, or biological quality of the stock?
7. Of what is the fact that there are generally more elderly people in the rural than in the urban population indicative?

THE MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL PEOPLE

WHEN we undertake an analysis of the mental qualities of rural people, we are confronted with scarcity of data. About all we have is a body of crude empirical opinion. To be sure, "mental measurements" have been devised and "intelligence quotients" are being calculated and used in the educational realm. They are convenient gauges of mental capacity or "mental equipment," by which is meant experience rather than something in-born. What men are born with is not and perhaps cannot be separated from what they have acquired; hence no existing test reveals man's mental nature as distinguished from his mental nurture. Individuals clearly vary in response to mental tests and the mechanisms in use measure the degree of this variability, but the cause of the variability is not measured. Hence the tests do not demonstrate a difference in native capacity. The cause of the variability is at least twofold. Much of it traces to difference in training and experience, but how much to difference in native endowment is not apparent in many cases.

How Farmers Rank in Intelligence Tests

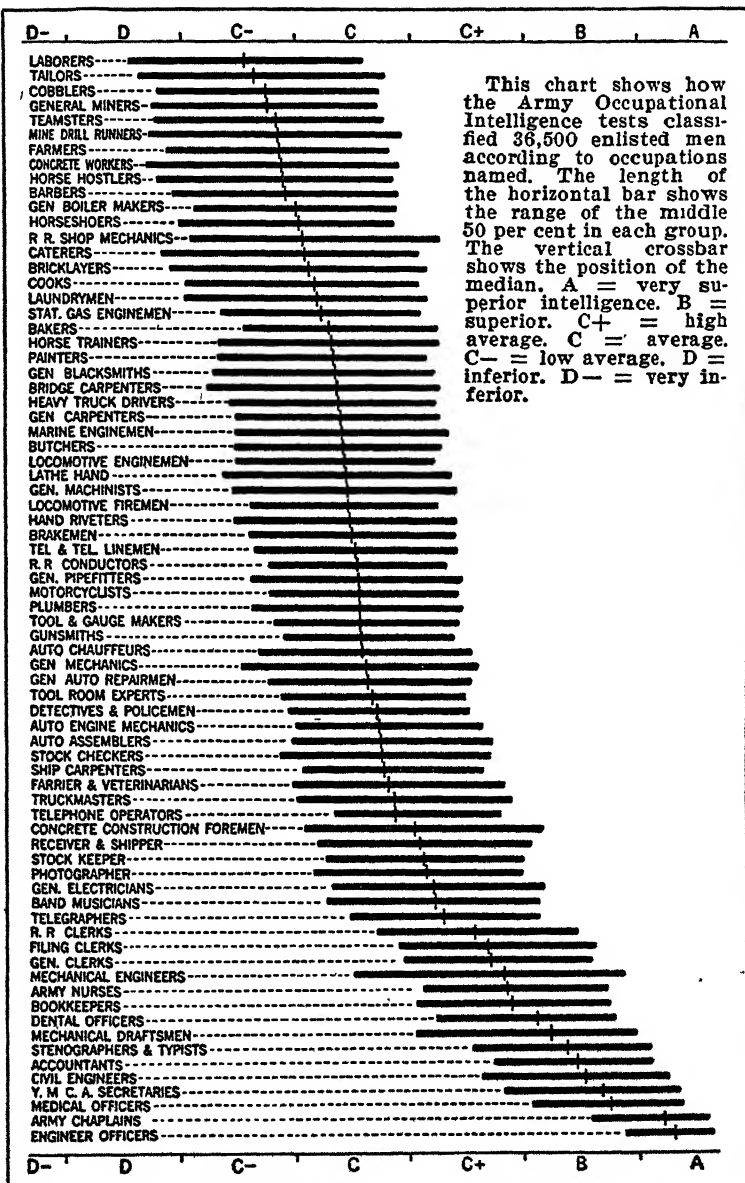
And yet numerous writers take the IQ's as a basis for classifying the population and proceed to give the approximate numbers in the various grades along a scale ranging from the very superior to the very inferior. For this purpose data are usually taken from the army tests under which about 1,000,000 men of the draft were examined. As to these data more than has already been said is unnecessary, for nothing was measured by the army examinations save a certain kind of mental equipment. Hence the findings are practically valueless as sources of conclusive evidence about the men-

tal quality of the American people. Moreover, for our particular purpose of sizing up the rural group, they are of but little use, since there was no separation of urban from rural recruits. The only help that they do give is on purely occupational lines. A number of recruits taken as a sample were classified according to occupations and intelligence, and in that sample farmers were included.

The following chart presents this classification and shows the farmers to be seventh from the bottom of the list of the seventy-four occupational groups in average intelligence. Their standing is a C— or “low average” intelligence. If this rating of countrymen in comparison chiefly with those engaged in urban pursuits were to be taken at its face value, there would remain little to say in their behalf. But it cannot be taken at its face value as representing the relative intelligence of American farmers for several reasons. In the first place, the tests were of such a nature that urban experience would normally enable the individual to react more favorably to them than would rural experience. In other words, the tests were products of urban minds and tuned to catch the reactions of the urban-minded. Hence countrymen came to them with a handicap. In the second place, most all the capable farmers were kept at home to raise food, and it is not reasonable to think that the draftees from the country were a fair sample of the manhood of the farms. Most any group in this array was probably a fairer sample of its class than was the farming group. Even if we accept the ratings as they stand, it is easy to account for the low place given the farmer, for the tests sought to find those with quick reactions. And one would expect those from the city environment, where a premium is put on quickness, to show up better than those from the rural environment, where life is not speeded up. So we are not justified in taking this rating of farmers very seriously.

It must, however, be acknowledged that other mental tests give some support to the findings of the army tests. One that may be referred to here was made by Professor Hornell Hart in a study of a Middle West city of 50,000 population.¹ In this connection

¹ Hornell Hart, “Urbanization of Population,” in Louis I. Dublin’s *Population Problems*, pp. 58-59.



This chart shows how the Army Occupational Intelligence tests classified 36,500 enlisted men according to occupations named. The length of the horizontal bar shows the range of the middle 50 per cent in each group. The vertical crossbar shows the position of the median. A = very superior intelligence. B = superior. C+ = high average. C = average. C- = low average. D = inferior. D- = very inferior.

10. Showing the Rank of Farmers in Comparison with Other Occupations in the Army Occupational Intelligence Tests

Source: *National School Service*, February 15, 1919.

groups of children migrating to the city in question were tested and their quotients compared with those of children born in the city. There were 248 children from rural areas and small towns; 130 children from cities of more than 25,000 population; and 447 from the city under study. The average mental-test quotients of the three groups were as follows:

Group	Average Mental-Test Quotient
Families from rural areas and small towns	97.0 \pm .5
Families from other large cities	99.4 \pm .7
Families from the city itself	99.3 \pm .4

From these data there appears a difference of $2.3 \pm .6$ in the mental-test quotients of the children born and reared in the city and those migrating from rural and small town areas. The rural children were obviously somewhat inferior in ability as measured by these tests. In addition, Hart says, they were emphatically inferior in their school progress.

Altho it is often assumed that the rural stock that migrates to the city is of superior quality to that remaining behind, there is no way of telling whether the particular group studied by Hart was representative, super-representative or sub-representative of the rural stock. However, other tests of groups of urban and rural school children have shown much the same results. For instance, in two counties of Illinois the median intelligence found in one was for urban children 104.5 and for rural 96.0; and in the other 101.0 for the urban, and 88.7 for the rural. The percentage of I.Q.'s under 80 in the first county was 2 for urban children and 11 for rural. In the second county it was 3 for urban, and 22 for rural.²

Such tests disclose only "measured intelligence," not innate ability. Presumably the difference between the I.Q.'s of urban and

² Frederick Osborn, "Characteristics and Differential Fertility of American Population Groups," *Social Forces*, Oct., 1923, pp. 8-16.

rural children is due to the difference in the educational systems of the two environments.

That rural schools are generally greatly inferior to urban is a well known fact. Moreover, the testing of country children shows that the I.Q. varies with the quality of schooling. For example, Baldwin, Fillmore, and Hadley applied the Stanford-Binet Tests to 253 children 6 to 14 years old in single-room schools and to 425 of the same age groups in consolidated schools, and found that the children of the latter averaged higher in intelligence.³ Here are their findings:

Type of School	I.Q.	PERCENTAGE		
		Below Ave.	Ave.	Above Ave.
One-room School	91.7	43	47	10
Consolidated School	99.4	23	54	23

Altho these data do not prove that quality of schooling alone determines the difference in I.Q., the fact that consolidated schools give better training than do single-room schools does show that schooling is an important factor. Moreover, since the urban school term is longer than the rural, the teachers better equipped, and the curriculum far superior to that of the vast majority of country schools, it may be that the difference between the I.Q.'s of town and country children is largely to be explained in terms of school opportunities.

Rural Mental Deficiency

Another approach to our problem is the negative one of forming some estimate of the prevalence of mental deficiency among the rural people. Here the army examinations afford some help. It is estimated from the number of mental defects discovered among the recruits, that the ratio 6.5 to 1,000 is approximately

³ B. T. Baldwin, E. A. Fillmore, and L. Hadley, *Rural Children*, D. Appleton and Co., 1930, pp. 238 ff.

correct for men in the age groups 21-31 years. This is exclusive of those confined in state and private institutions.⁴ Whether this ratio holds uniformly for all age groups of the population and alike for men and women is not known. The presumption, however, is that it does not, for the mortality among mental defectives is especially high in youth, with a frequency far greater among those under eighteen years of age than among those in age groups over eighteen years. Thus there would be fewer defectives in the more advanced age groups than in the younger. This being the case, it follows that there will normally be a greater percentage of mental defects in the rural than in the urban population, since the rural contains a larger proportion of youths and children under eighteen.

On purely logical grounds it may therefore be asserted that there are more mental defectives in the rural than in the urban population. Entirely apart from these presumptions, there remains the fact that of the rejections made by the army boards, "mental defectiveness" was the cause assigned on the average in 1.5 per cent of the cases among urban draftees as compared with 3.9 per cent among rural draftees. Since the age grouping is the same for both elements, the rural makes a positively poorer showing.

Certain surveys in a few localities tend to substantiate the opinion that there is more mental defect among rural than among urban children. For instance, one study of mental defects in a rural county of Delaware by Treadway and Lundberg, reveals in general a preponderance of defects among the rural as compared with the town children.⁵ Table 20 indicates an average of 1.28 per cent of mental defects for the white country children in contrast to .87 per cent for the town children. No general conclusions can be drawn from such slender facts, but it is of some significance that they corroborate the army data, other studies, and a good deal of empirical observation. A fairly strong presumption that feeblemind-

⁴ See Dr. Pearce Bailey and Dr. Haber, "Mental Deficiency: Its Frequency and Characteristics in the United States as Determined by the Examination of Recruits." *Mental Hygiene*, IV, 3, 1920, pp. 564-596.

⁵ Walter L. Treadway and Emma O. Lundberg, "Mental Defect in a Rural County," 1919 Children's Bureau, *Publication No. 48*.

edness is more prevalent in the country districts than in towns and cities is therefore established.

At best one has to view the reports of all studies of this subject with a great deal of caution, for standardized methods of measurement are rarely employed. Naturally there will be variation between communities and sections of the country as regards both rural and urban. Much of it will be real but some will be due wholly to the difficulty just mentioned. Thus for the whole population of this Delaware county about one-half of 1 per cent are

Table 20

PREVALENCE OF MENTAL DEFECT IN WHITE SCHOOL CHILDREN *

Locality	NUMBER INSPECTED			NUMBER AND PER CENT MENTALLY DEFICIENT					
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total		Boys		Girls	
				Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent
Whole county ..	6,004	3,014	2,990	67	1.11	46	1.52	21	0.70
East Side:									
Country	1,858	1,000	858	27	1.45	18	1.80	9	1.05
Towns	1,371	679	692	11	.80	6	.88	5	.72
West Side:									
Country	1,719	815	904	19	1.11	15	1.84	4	.44
Towns	1,056	520	536	10	.95	7	1.35	3	.56

* *Ibid.*

estimated to be defectives.⁶ An Indiana survey of ten counties finds 1.65 per cent of the general population defective.⁷ In California, school surveys indicate one to four per cent of the children of school age are defectives.⁸ Of the surveys it must be said that, "In general no formal psychological tests were given, but the Suspected Cases were judged on a sociological basis with the possession of ability or inability to maintain existence accepted as the essential difference between the normal and feeble-minded persons."⁹ So it is unsafe to talk in terms of exact figures about the relative amount of feeble-mindedness in country and town.

In addition to the presumption tentatively established by such

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁷ *Mental Defects in Indiana; A Survey of Ten Counties*, State Board of Charities.

⁸ *Surveys in Mental Deviation*, p. 28.

⁹ Mina A. Sessions, *The Feeble-minded in a Rural County in Ohio*, p. 5.

facts as we have cited, there are certain other reasons that strengthen the probability that there are more mental defectives in the country than in the town population. Not the least of these is the prevalence of inbreeding in isolated rural districts. Altho it is not known how much feeble-mindedness can justly be attributed to heredity, it is pretty certain that much of it rises from this source, and that inbreeding might tend to increase it. Again, in the drainage of the country population to the city, insofar as the culls of humanity are left behind, more mental defectives will normally appear. Thus there are hill towns in New England where scarcely a normal family remains. A study of one, whose population had fallen from a maximum of some 1,500 three or four generations ago to about 300, led the investigator to conclude that fully ninety per cent of the present population were abnormal. Other regions, as we have already stated, are showing the influence of a culling out process which presumably leaves a disproportionate number of defectives in the country.

The eugenists are disposed to argue that country life by its very nature (inasmuch as it is sheltered) is conducive to a lower mental life than is selected by the urban environment which subjects people to a merciless competition. Thus Professor Roswell H. Johnson says:

The contrast between the introvert who prefers the undisturbing quality of the country and the extrovert who is oppressed by what seems to him to be its colorlessness is probably the largest differentiating factor. Another factor is the relatively stabilized life of agriculture, where there is a well-known standard procedure readily learned by imitation. This is comforting to some limited minds who are uncomfortable when confronted with the new on all sides. The life of the agricultural laborer or hireling fits a still more inferior type, where there is little real responsibility, where the chores are definitely known and of a routine nature, and where his life is sheltered and aid is available to him in meeting his problems. In fact, some of the protective features of serfdom and slavery are available here, just as in the case of the domestic servant. These conditions draw to the country on the whole an intellectually inferior type as shown in the comparative mental test results referred to earlier. Of course, there is a contrasted current of retired business men, engineers, and the like, who choose to retire to the peace of the country after an over-taxing life; but this contribution

has little significance, since they usually retire after the child-bearing period of their wives, and their children have already built up the city habit and do not become actual country folk.¹⁰

There is truth in this statement, but it can be easily overemphasized, for it is open to question whether the country affords more of a sheltering environment for those of low grade mind than does the city. There are plenty of nooks and crannies in the urban environment where the inferior seek refuge. These shelters are different from those found in the country, but no one can say positively that they do not harbor as many inferiors as the country shelters do.

Notwithstanding the facts and presumptions so far established, data gathered by the Bureau of the Census showing first admissions of mental defectives to institutions do not indicate that the rural population is as defective as the urban. The latest data available are for 1933, since subsequent reports fail to distinguish between urban and rural sources of origin for the population in institutions. Table 21 presents the facts for 78 state institutions. It will be observed that of both mental defectives and epileptics taken together the urban environment furnished 10.3 per 100,000, while the rural furnished only 4.8. Thus the rural appears in a most favorable light.

Despite these data we cannot call the case settled in favor of the rural population, for the data hardly give an index to the relative prevalence of mental deficiency and epilepsy in urban and rural areas. The Census reports have repeatedly warned that the statistics do not furnish even an approximate measure of the total number of the mentally defective. It is well known that only a small percentage of them ever get into institutions. Hence the institutional Census does not aid much in the effort to discover the differences between rural and urban populations, since it gives only a small sample and that probably not equally representative of city and country populations.

There are several reasons why it is not fairly representative of the rural. The difficulty of social adjustment in the city as compared

¹⁰ Roswell H. Johnson, "The Eugenics of the City," *Publications American Sociological Society*, Vol. XX, p. 68.

with the country makes it "probable that of the total number of mental defectives and epileptics in the community the proportion sent to special State institutions is larger in the cities than in the rural districts."¹¹ Again, the higher ratio in urban than in rural districts is likely due in part at least to the fact that State institutions for this class are more readily accessible to urban than to rural people. Moreover, the states with large urban populations have more adequate institutions of this sort and hence show a

Table 21

FIRST ADMISSIONS TO STATE INSTITUTIONS, BY ENVIRONMENT, TYPE OF MENTAL DISORDER, AND SEX: 1933^a

Environment and Type of Mental Disorder	Number			Number per 100,000 of 1930 Population of Same Sex and Environment			Per Cent Distribution		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	10,806	5,956	4,850	8.8	9.6	8.0	...	...	...
Urban	7,090	3,804	3,286	10.3	11.1	9.4	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mentally defective but not epileptic	5,063	2,619	2,444	7.3	7.7	7.0	71.4	68.8	74.4
Both mentally defective and epileptic	941	538	403	1.4	1.6	1.2	13.3	14.1	12.3
Epileptic but not mentally defective	615	389	226	.9	1.1	.6	8.7	10.2	6.9
Neither mentally defective nor epileptic and unknown	471	258	213	.7	.8	.6	6.6	6.8	6.5
Total mental defectives ..	6,004	3,157	2,847	8.7	9.2	8.2	84.7	83.0	86.6
Total epileptics	1,556	927	629	2.3	2.7	1.8	21.9	24.4	19.1
Rural	2,568	1,305	1,263	4.8	4.7	4.9	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mentally defective but not epileptic	1,695	818	877	3.1	2.9	3.4	66.0	62.7	69.4
Both mentally defective and epileptic	471	259	212	.9	.9	.8	18.3	19.8	16.8
Epileptic but not mentally defective	268	170	98	.5	.6	.4	10.4	13.0	7.8
Neither mentally defective nor epileptic and unknown	134	58	76	.2	.2	.3	5.2	4.4	6.0
Total mental defectives ..	2,166	1,077	1,089	4.0	3.8	4.2	84.3	82.5	86.2
Total epileptics	739	429	310	1.4	1.5	1.2	28.8	32.9	24.5
Unknown Environment ...	1,148	847	301	...	...	..	...	...	...

^a *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions 1933*, Bureau of the Census, 1935.

¹¹ *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions 1933*, Bureau of the Census, 1935, p. 32.

larger proportion of the classes in question under institutional care than do many states that are preponderantly rural. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that owing to less adequate home facilities city people are compelled to make greater use of institutions in the care of their mentally deficient than are country people. In view of these considerations it is therefore not reasonable to conclude that the advantage really lies with the rural population. Indeed, it is doubtful if the data from institutions are of sufficient significance to overthrow the presumption that there is more mental deficiency among rural than among urban dwellers.

From certain other sources we get light on the negative aspects of mental status in the country districts. These are data on commitments to institutions for the care of the insane, suicide rates, and perhaps some facts indicating the prevalence of pathological mental conditions among rural dwellers. In the case of suicide rates we have evidence of mental instability. It is not practical to compare suicide rates for the urban and rural population before the 1930 census, since mortality statistics published by the United States Census Bureau drew the line between urban and rural at aggregations of 10,000 instead of 2,500, where it is drawn for other purposes. Taking such data as are available, and using the 1930 population as basis, we have attempted to calculate the suicide rates per 100,000 for the year 1936. The figures arrived at are as follows: registration area, 14.2; urban, 16.8; and rural, 12.5. These rates are only approximately correct, for the population was larger than in 1930. Assuming the farm population in 1936 to be 32,000,000 and 56 per cent of the rural, the farm rate would be 11.7.

According to these figures, the urban rate is over four points higher than the rural, and five higher than the farm. If the rates for the large industrial cities and the farm population were calculated and compared, the difference between the two would probably be much greater.

However, it would not be uniformly favorable to the country, for some industrial cities have a comparatively low rate. In 1929, taken as a fairly normal year, the following rates prevailed in certain cities and certain rural states: Lowell, 4.9; Fall River, 6.9;

Scranton, 7.7; Mississippi, 4.8; South Carolina, 5.7; and North Dakota, 6.5. Again, other generally rural states ran much higher than many of the largest cities; thus Nevada, 37.8; California, 24.8; Washington, 22.1; Montana, 21.7; and Arizona, 20.5. The explanation of such high rates is probably to be found partially in the fact that many people of low physical and mental health have migrated to these states from the cities of the East. More likely, however, the main explanation is found in the fact that these states have a great excess of males over females in their rural population, since about three times as many males as females commit suicide.

In the last analysis one cannot be sure that such differences as exist between city and country are not due to environmental conditions rather than to the stock. Perhaps if the two groups were to change places, we might find the rates also changing. The cityman in the country lanes, open fields, and quiet villages might be quite as stable as the countryman is now, and the countryman on the great white ways, the stock exchanges, and the strenuous social ladders might resort to suicide as often as does the city dweller. Homogeneous rural communities hold the individual to greater social responsibility than do cities. The rural codes and customs have direct and sustaining influence. Life is personal and its crises call out personal responses from neighbors. There is thus less chance of maladjustment than in the city, where primary groups do not come to the aid of the distressed.¹²

In view of the widely varying rates both for cities and rural districts, it looks as tho many factors are at work causing suicide. That being probable, not overmuch stress should be placed on the figures that give an average in favor of the country.

On the relative amount of insanity in urban and rural districts, the census report of January 1, 1933, is available. Table 22 taken from this report summarizes the data for first admissions to hospitals. It will be seen that the rate of admissions is lower for the rural districts than for the urban in each group of psychoses except psychoses with pellagra. In many of the other groups it will be

¹² See Ruth Shonle Cavan, "Who Commits Suicide," *The Survey*, May 15, 1927, pp. 200-201; *Suicide*, University of Chicago Press, 1928, pp. 45-55.

Table 22

NUMBER OF FIRST ADMISSIONS TO STATE HOSPITALS PER 100,000 OF THE GENERAL POPULATION, BY PSYCHOSIS, ENVIRONMENT, AND SEX 1933 ^a

[Ratio not shown where less than 0.1]

Psychosis	Urban		Rural		Psychosis	Urban		Rural	
	Male	Female	Male	Female		Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	79.5	57.3	41.3	27.3	Manic depressive.	6.5	9.1	5.3	5.5
With psychosis	71.0	54.4	36.6	25.7	Involution melan-				
Traumatic	7	1	2		cholia	9	1.9	.5	.8
Senile	5.7	5.9	4.2	2.6	Dementia praecox				
With cerebral ar-					(schizophrenia) .	14.8	13.3	6.9	5.6
teriosclerosis . .	9.5	6.8	4.7	2.2	Paranoia or para-				
General paralysis	10.3	2.9	2.9	.9	noid conditions .	1.1	1.1	.5	.4
With cerebral					Epileptic psychoses	1.6	1.1	1.6	1.0
syphilis	1.5	.6	.7	.3	Psychoneuroses				
With Hunting-					and neuroses . .	1.3	1.3	.8	.9
ton's chorea . .	.1	.1	.1	.1	With psychopathic				
With brain tumor	.1	.1	...	...	personality . . .	1.4	.7	.4	.2
With other brain					With mental defi-				
or nervous dis-					ciency	2.0	1.7	2.0	1.4
eases	1.1	.7	.6	.5	Undiagnosed and				
Alcoholic . . .	6.9	1.2	1.9	.1	unknown	3.5	2.6	2.0	1.1
Due to drugs and					Without psy-				
other exogenous					chosis	8.5	2.9	4.8	1.6
toxins . . . . .	.4	.4	.1	.1					
With pellagra . .	.1	.3	.3	.8					
With other so-									
matic diseases .	1.5	2.0	.9	1.0					

^a *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Diseases 1933*, Bureau of the Census, 1935, p. 49

observed that the city rate is more than double that of the country. The average is nearly twice that of the rural districts. The rate in both areas is higher for males than for females. In general paralysis and alcoholic groups the rates for males are very much in excess of those for females. On the other hand, the females have a higher rate than the males in somatic diseases, manic-depressive, involution melancholia, pellagra groups, and psychoneuroses.

The urban ratio was far higher than the rural ratio in the four psychoses groups—psychoses with cerebral arteriosclerosis, general paralysis, alcoholic psychoses, and dementia praecox. From the country dementia praecox, manic-depressive, psychoses with cerebral arteriosclerosis and senile are the leading types.

Altho these data are doubtless a close approximation to the true conditions, it must be recognized that urban people send a larger proportion of their insane to hospitals than do rural dwellers.

A report based on a study of 1,000 disability claims for psychoneurosis by the Medical director of the Equitable Life Assur-

ance Society in 1937 indicated that neuroses was nearly three times as high for women as for men. Among those engaged in the ten occupations studied, farmers ranked sixth. Only nurses, students, manual workers, and housewives showed less. The highest incidence of neuroses occurred among other occupations in the following order; clerical workers, executives, teachers, merchants, and professional workers. If any conclusion at all is justified by this study, it is that the monotonous and high pressure urban occupations are much more conducive to neuroses than are those less taxing to mental energy, among which farming is included.

There is a popular notion abroad that rural women are peculiarly subject to insanity. The data showing first admissions to hospitals give no ground for such belief. In only two psychoses, manic-depressive and involution melancholia, do females show higher rates than males in first commitments from the rural area.

The Country Population and Talented Men and Women

A popular myth is abroad that the country districts are the source of the nation's talented men and leaders. This belief has been widely affirmed by the orator and journalist and generally accepted as true. The following item, doubtless true enough as an isolated fact, is a typical instance of how support is given this myth by the way the bit of evidence is written up. "In Iowa it is good fortune to be the child of a farmer insofar as those abilities and attitudes which make for superior scholarship in high schools are concerned. Bulletin No. 46, 1923, of the United States Bureau of Education, gives the results of a study of distinguished high school pupils of Iowa. Facts were obtained for 316 high school seniors who were rated as distinguished pupils. Of the 316 pupils earning this rating, 172 were children of farmers. This is 54 per cent of the total number. The farm population constitutes only 41 per cent of the total population of the state, so it is evident that the farm-bred children secure a higher representation among distinguished high school seniors than their numbers would lead one to expect. From all the facts presented in the complete study the general conclusion

is reached that superior students in Iowa high schools come from country homes." ¹³

Some years ago Dr. W. J. Spillman attempted to prove that the country districts had furnished the chief leaders of America. He found that 92 per cent of the presidents, 91.2 per cent of the governors, and 85.9 per cent of the cabinet officers were born on farms or in rural villages. He found also that 55.4 per cent of the railway presidents, 64 per cent of the House of Representatives, and 70.6 per cent of the Senate of that date (1909) were from the same source. For all six classes he calculated that the average per cent from the country was 69.4. While recognizing the meagerness of his data, Dr. Spillman nevertheless argued that since the figures are consistent with each other their correctness is confirmed. ¹⁴

For the particular groups of leaders considered the facts may well be as Dr. Spillman represented. Indeed, one may go farther and assert that insofar as absolute numbers go, the majority of American leaders in practically all walks of life were probably until recently country born. Even so, nothing would be proved, for such figures are worthless unless they show the ratio of leaders to the numbers in each class of the population. The absence of any such calculation in Dr. Spillman's work utterly negates its value.

By the use of better methods, conclusions have been reached to the effect that the country districts are not now nor ever have been as fecund of talented people as the city. In fact they have never furnished even their proportionate share. In this they have not been worse in America than in the Old World. Indeed, they have made a far better showing, if we can trust the studies that have been made in this field. Alfred Odin published in his *Genese des Grands Hommes* the results of an inquiry into the cause of genius in the cases of some five thousand most distinguished persons in the five hundred years of French history. Seven types of environment, viz.: physical, ethnological, religious, local, economic, social, and educational, were considered. Under local, country and city were com-

¹³ *Rural America*, November, 1925, p. 15.

¹⁴ W. J. Spillman, *Science*, 30:40-5-7, Sept. 24, 1909.

pared, and the city was found to be thirteen times more fecund of talent than the country. Eighty per cent of all distinguished men were found to have been born in the large cities of France.¹⁵

Another study, this time of talent in England and Wales by R. Clyde White,¹⁶ shows in a general way somewhat the same thing as Odin found. The material used by White was the names in *Who's Who* in England of those born from 1851 to 1881. Calculating the number of leaders per 100,000 of the population for the rural and urban groups by decades, the following results were obtained:

Decade	Rural	Urban
1851-60	3.08	6.70
1861-70	3.48	5.69
1871-80	2.32	2.38

It will be observed that for the first two decades the rate of the city is about twice that of the country. In the last decade the two are about equal. The author suggests that the change is probably more apparent than real, for the country-born gentry get into *Who's Who* earlier than the city born who win place on merit; hence, given a few more years, it is likely the ratio will again approach that of the earlier decades.

• Professor George R. Davies studied the problem of talent in relation to density of population in America.¹⁷ Making use of the names in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in Science* and Cattell's list of Scientific men, and ranking the states in which these men were born according to density, he discovered a high coefficient of correlation between the amount of talent and population density. The correlations varied from 0.59 to 0.76, depending on the sources used. Thus the conclusion was reached that urban districts are more fecund of talent than rural.

Dr. Scott Nearing in his study of "The Geographical Distribution of American Genius" took the first 10,000 names in *Who's*

¹⁵ See L. F. Ward's *Applied Sociology*, pp. 226-230.

¹⁶ R. C. White, "The City-drift of Population in Relation to Social Efficiency," *The Journal of Social Forces*, November, 1923, pp. 17-23.

¹⁷ George R. Davies, *Social Environment*, pp. 106-107.

Who in America for 1912-1914 as the basis of his investigation.¹⁸ His analysis shows that the twenty-seven leading cities of the United States in 1850, which had 20,000 or more population each, were the birthplaces of one-fifth or more of the eminent men during the period 1850 to 1880. During this period these cities had from one-twelfth to one-eighth of the total population of the United States, never averaging over one-seventh, and yet they produced never less than one-fifth of the eminent persons. This fact seems significant when taken in connection with similar findings of Davies and others. However, it should be stated that Nearing reaches the conclusion that there is no absolute relation between urban population and the number of eminent persons. He says: "There is no absolute correspondence between the proportion of urban population and the proportion of eminent persons born. An analysis of the per cent of population which is urban shows that, while New England is far in the lead of the other sections of the country, there are a number of states which report a large proportion of eminent persons born and a comparatively small proportion of urban population. The reverse condition also is true. Rhode Island, with the lowest proportion of eminent persons reported by any New England state, has the highest per cent of urban population (93.5) of any state in the union. New Hampshire, with the highest proportion of any New England state, has only 38.7 per cent of population urban. New Jersey, with a per cent of 53.7 urban, reports the lowest proportion of eminent persons of any state in the Middle Atlantic group."

Dr. J. M. Cattell studied American men of science as to their distribution and birthplace.¹⁹ He selected a thousand leading men from the several fields of science in proportion to the total number of investigators in each science. Thus the following numbers were chosen from each field; chemistry, 175; physics, 150; zoology, 150; botany, 100; geology, 100; mathematics, 80; pathology, 60; astronomy, 50; psychology, 50; physiology, 40; anatomy, 25;

¹⁸ Scott Nearing, *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. 85, Aug., 1914, pp. 189-199.

¹⁹ J. M. Cattell, "The Distribution of American Men of Science," *Science*, Vols. XXIV, pp. 658-665, 699-707, 732-742; XXXII, pp. 633-648.

anthropology, 20. The method of selecting the individuals was by asking ten leading representatives of each science to arrange the students of that science in the order of merit. By averaging the ten positions assigned to each man and calculating the average deviations of the judgments the probable order of merit for the students in each science, together with data for the probable error of the positions of each individual, was secured. A combined list of the students of the different sciences was then secured by interpolation and the probable error calculated. The list contained 1,443 names, of which the first 1,000 were taken for investigation.

Of the 1,000 leading scientists, 866 were found to be native to the United States. Of these, 224 were born in cities, which in 1860, or the approximate time of the birth of the men, had a total population of about 4,500,000. This population equaled about one-sixth of the rural population, which was around 27,000,000 at that time. This urban sixth of the population produced more than a quarter of the scientific men. The urban birth rate of scientific men was 50 and the rural birth rate was 23.8, or less than half. Cattell's explanation of this is as follows: "The superior position of the towns is doubtless due to a more favorable environment, but it may also be in part due to the fact that the parents of those scientific men were the abler clergymen and others of their generation who were drawn to the cities."

Following Odin's method, Professor E. L. Clarke made a study of the thousand most distinguished American men of letters.²⁰ Under the category of occupations of the fathers of the literati he found 328 were sons of professional men; 151 were sons of commercial men; 139, of agriculturists; 48, of mechanical, clerical, and unskilled men; and 334 were sons of men whose occupation was not determined. As to occupation, Clarke concludes that more than half were sons of non-agricultural men. Indeed, of the whole number the agricultural group contributed but 14 per cent, insofar as known, altho this group constituted never less than 80 per cent of the nation's population during the period considered. The agri-

²⁰ E. L. Clarke, "American Men of Letters," *Columbia University Studies in Economics, History and Public Law*, 1914.

cultural class furnished fewer than its share; the business classes, more than their quota; the professional classes, many times their proportion; and the mechanics, clerks and laborers, relatively few and far below what was to be expected of them. Under the category of locality Clarke concludes that altho during the period studied "the capital and chief cities of the several states had never contained over 9 per cent of the total population of the United States, they had been the birthplace of approximately 32 per cent of the men of letters."

Another study of the source of national leadership was made by S. S. Visser. Data from *Who's Who in America* (1922-23) were used. The year 1870 is nearest the birth of most of those whose names appear in this publication. At that date the farm population was 26,952,301 and the population of cities, towns and villages was 11,606,070. With 70 per cent of the population on farms at the time of the birth of most of those listed, one would expect to find the vast majority were country born. But such is not the case. Only 6,288, or 25.9 per cent, were born on farms. Altho only 30 per cent of the population in 1870 was found in cities, towns and villages, 17,990 notables, or 74.1 of those listed in *Who's Who*, were born in such places. It thus appears that each million urban people produced 1,550 notable men and women, whereas each million rural people produced only 233 notable men and women. Visser assigns the following proportional contributions of talent on the basis of the population of 1870; cities six times as many as farms, villages nine times as many, and suburbs eleven times as many.²¹

Confirmation of these generalizations was made by Zimmerman in a study of farm migrants in Minnesota. He found that relatively few of the children of farmers going to the cities had attained to the so-called upper economic and social classes. Sixty per cent of those leaving the farms had entered some urban occupation. They were distributed as follows: 23 per cent were unskilled laborers; 13.8 per cent, artisans; 10.4 per cent were in clerical or "white-

²¹ Stephen S. Visser, "A Study of the Type of the Place of Birth and of the Occupation of Fathers of Subjects of Sketches in 'Who's Who in America'," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 30, pp. 551-557.

collar" jobs; 10.1 per cent, in professions; and 2.6 per cent had become business owners or entrepreneurs. The professional class included a number of girls who had become registered nurses.²²

In the face of the facts brought out by these and other studies that might be cited, representing as they do approaches from various angles, including the source of scientists, literati, and general leadership, and the significance of occupations and population density, it looks as tho the belief that the country folk furnish the nation's leaders is nothing but a popular fallacy without any foundation in fact.

What, then, are we to conclude as to the quality of the rural stock? Does it follow that it is inferior to the urban? Those responsible for the findings would be slow to admit this. On the contrary, they would be inclined to attribute the difference in fecundity of leadership between the urban and rural to environmental influences. They would explain it on the basis of nurture rather than nature, and be disposed to say with Odin, "Genius is in things, not in men." Be this as it may, and no one has yet proved the case either way, it is difficult not to think that there has been a selective process at work on the stock tending to concentrate a disproportionate share of the more capable in the towns and cities. This, indeed, is the explanation hinted at by Cattell, concurred in by Clarke, and succinctly stated by Professor Thorndike in the following—"That cities give birth to an undue proportion of great men does not in the least prove that city life made them great; it may prove that cities attract and retain great men, whose sons are thus city born."²³

It is entirely possible that the lists of eminent men are compiled in a way to favor the city. There is a tendency to select those who appear in *Who's Who* on the basis of occupation, with a strong bias in favor of the vocations of the city. Able farmers rarely are included. Many of them, however, are fully equal in ability and achievement to numerous city men who are counted among the

²² C. C. Zimmerman, "The Migration to Towns and Cities," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 32, p. 453.

²³ E. L. Thorndike, "A Sociologist's Theory of Education," *Bookman*, Vol. 24, p. 290.

eminent. The farmer may remain mute and inglorious because it is not the fashion to count his calling as a field of greatness. Moreover, most data on this question do not allow for the difference in age grouping between country and city, which, unrecognized, puts the country at a disadvantage. Again, there is a failure to distinguish between the country and the city on the basis of occupational classes, and to compare laborers with laborers, entrepreneurs with farm owners, etc., so as to discover the relative contributions of each to the ranks of leadership. Such corrections might lessen the contrasts but would not alter the relative position of the rural population in the production of talented people.

Do Country and City Furnish Different Types of Ability?

Ethnologists have been interested in discovering how far the city and country districts of Europe are made up of different racial elements. Ammon tried to show that the longheaded Nordic inclined to the city, while the broadheaded Alpine was wedded to the soil. Ripley and others have called in question Ammon's generalization, showing that it does not hold true generally.²⁴ The significance of this difference, insofar as there is any difference and insofar as there is any basis for the classification, Nordic and Alpine races, lies in the fact that the Nordic is supposed to be more capable than the Alpine, and consequently the city population more capable than the peasantry. There is of course no hint of any such differences in America. There may be, however, differences between the types of ability produced by the rural and the urban stocks. Upon this question Henry Cabot Lodge's study of "The Distribution of Ability in the United States"²⁵ has bearing. Making use of 14,234 names from Appleton's *Encyclopedia of American Biography*, and classifying them under eighteen groups, viz., statesmen, soldiers, clergy, lawyers, physicians, writers, artists, scientists, educators, naval officers, businessmen, philanthropists, pioneers and explorers, inventors, engineers, architects, musicians, and actors,

²⁴ See W. Z. Ripley, *Races of Europe*, Chapter XX.

²⁵ Henry Cabot Lodge, *The Century*, May and September, 1891.

Lodge found certain types prevalent in certain parts of the country. Thus he states, "We find that while the southern and southwestern states, including Virginia and Maryland, are comparatively strong in statesmen, soldiers and pioneers, and in a less degree in lawyers, they are weak in all other classes. The ability of the South, less in amount than that of the New England and Middle states, was confined to three or four departments. In other words, there was in the South but little variety of intellectual activity. In the Middle states and New England ability sought every channel of expression and was displayed in various ways. All the states in not very widely varying proportions produced statesmen, soldiers, lawyers, pioneers, and clergymen; and the seaboard states, naval officers. But almost all the literature, art, science, business, philanthropy and music, almost all the architects and actors were produced by the Middle and New England states."

Cattell's study of men of science and Clarke's study of American literati revealed much the same distribution as Lodge found. While Lodge is not concerned with the difference between the urban and rural, it is clear that the differences he points out follow substantially along the lines separating the preponderantly rural from the urban sections of the United States. Hence we cannot go far astray by interpreting the distinctions made as those existing between country and city groups. With this assumption, we may say, I think, that it is clear that the country does not contribute a great variety of talent. It takes the city with its compact and varied life to do that. Moreover, it appears that the rural group does not contribute many persons who take to the learned lines of leadership. Professor Wilson Gee's study of the origin of leaders in American Education, based on the 11,242 names in Cattell's "Leaders in Education," tends to confirm this conclusion. The rural population lacked 10.4% of furnishing its proportionate quota calculated on the basis of the census of 1880, as the date near to which most of the leaders were born. The percentage of rural born college presidents exceeded the quota.²⁶

²⁶ Wilson Gee, "Rural-Urban Origins of Leaders in Education," *Rural Sociology*, Dec., 1937, pp. 402-408.

It is more to the field of action than to that of thought that the country furnishes recruits. The type is one that can manage things and, to a lesser degree, men, rather than abstract ideas and the processes of science. One is tempted to think that the writer of Ecclesiasticus was more than half right when he said:

How can he get wisdom who holdeth the plow?
He shall not be sought after in public council
Nor sit high in the congregation.

It is probable that by far the greater part of this difference between the countryman and the cityman is, indeed, as the ancient sage hints, in the circumstances under which the two groups live instead of in innate differences. The rural environment is dominated very largely by one occupation and fails to stimulate to many lines of ability. The city, in contrast, has a complexity and a universality that stimulate on many sides and to many activities. Still, one cannot entirely ignore the possibility that there is to some extent a real difference in the country and city stock.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Since a far larger proportion of the farm than of the city population occupy managerial positions, how would you expect the average I.Q.'s of the two groups to compare?
2. Have any changes occurred in the last generation in relation to agriculture to require a higher degree of intelligence for successful farming than formerly?
3. Because there is much less insanity in the country than in the city, is the presumption thereby established that there is also much less feeble-mindedness?
4. Why should rural females have a higher rate than males for the psychosis, manic-depressive and involution melancholia?
5. Assuming the contention that the country supplies but few of the distinguished men of America is true, have we any valid ground for holding the rural stock to be biologically inferior?

MOVEMENTS OF THE RURAL PEOPLE

THE American countryman is much bound by custom, but he is not much bound by place. He has always been given to moving. He has pioneered and followed the frontier, pulled up stakes and shifted from one locality to another. He has responded to the beckonings of opportunity, until the occupation to which he was heir has held him no more firmly than place.

Thus great instability characterizes rural society. This has long been the situation, but of late the movement of population has become greatly accelerated. This acceleration has developed as the city frontier has superseded the frontier of forest and prairie.

Mobility of population connotes a dynamic society. American society has been mobile and dynamic from the beginning. This was due in part to immigration and in part to the development of industrial civilization. Above all, a vast empire of unoccupied land, long awaiting settlement, acted for generations as a stimulant to migration. In these basic factors lie the explanation at once of our dynamic life and of our population mobility.

Population Movements Within Rural Territory

1. Inter-state migrations have been more extensive in the past than at present, tho they are still of very great importance. For a century the main trend was from the East to the West and South. The quest of better land, cheaper land and eventually free land induced the great westward and southward migrations from the older states. By 1850 the rural towns of New England had generally reached their maximum populations and migrations had begun to sap their strength. In many cases this had occurred long before that

date.¹ This situation was typical of the East generally. Altho not all the exodus was to other rural regions, the major part of it was. Particularly from 1850 to 1880, when the migratory tide was at its full, whole colonies went west.

Preceding 1860 there was a similar movement from the older states of the South to the newer and lower South. The population of the older states became static while that of the Gulf regions grew apace. Following the Civil War, this southward migration of the Southern population was renewed by a marked shifting of the Negroes to the southwestern sections.

Somewhat later the Middle Western farmer took up the westward march begun by his forebears, who had themselves pioneered the middle borders from colonial states. However, the movement from the Middle West was slower and less dramatic. The total exodus was less and the consequences attending the outflow were by no means so serious as they had been in the eastern states.

It is estimated that by 1890 close to 4,500,000 had moved from the eastern states across the Mississippi.

About a quarter of a century ago, the northwestern farmers began moving into the newer regions farther north and across the border into the Canadian Northwest. Meanwhile, the trans-Mississippi migration had slowed down, and a strong reverse movement had set in. The free-land frontier had virtually disappeared and with it the lure of the West, causing the tides of migration to turn eastward. By 1930, 1,650,000 western born people were living in the East. The deflation of land values after 1920 slowed down the eastward flow. Later droughts in the semi-arid West from Kansas to Canada forced hundreds of thousands to vacate the "Dust Bowl" for the Pacific Coast.² Apart from that, by 1935 western expansion appeared to be a thing of the past, since the Eastern Division States were gaining farm population more rapidly than the Western Division States. Even the drought episode probably did not completely reverse the new trend.

¹ A. E. Cance, *New England Population Decline*, American Statistical Association, 1912.

² *Farm Population Estimates, January 1, 1938*, U. S. Dept. of Agr. Bureau of Agricultural Economics, June 16, 1938.

The extent to which inter-state migration of rural people takes place can be indicated only in a general way. The 1930 census reported 28 per cent of the native urban, 18 per cent of the native rural, 14.7 per cent of the native rural-farm, and 23.2 per cent of the native rural non-farm populations as living in other than their natal states. The census also reports data on interdivisional migrations from 1870 to 1930, showing net gain or loss decade by decade as seen in Table 23. Thruout the whole period the West South Central, Mountain, and Pacific divisions showed net gains, with high points attained in 1910, 1920, and 1930 respectively. Until the last three decades or so, part of this interdivision movement was the rural population in its westward drift.

Table 23

NATIVE POPULATION BY DIVISION OF BIRTH AND DIVISION OF RESIDENCE
WITH NET GAIN OR LOSS THRU INTERDIVISIONAL MIGRATION; 1870-1930 *

(In Thousands)

Census Division	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
New England	- 454.3	- 426.5	- 357.1	- 218.8	- 205.1	- 170.9	- 307.0
Middle Atlantic	- 1251.3	- 1367.8	- 1337.0	- 1008.2	- 932.5	- 805.3	- 255.6
East North							
Central	+ 842.0	+ 110.8	- 706.2	- 855.4	- 1376.4	- 898.2	+ 69.7
West North							
Central	+ 1381.6	+ 1880.2	+ 2016.4	+ 1328.6	+ 512.3	- 210.8	- 1236.4
South Atlantic	- 1142.7	- 1086.8	- 991.2	- 950.6	- 901.2	- 749.2	- 1088.8
East South							
Central	- 202.7	- 530.0	- 686.6	- 880.6	- 1176.9	- 1565.4	- 1915.4
West South							
Central	+ 630.7	+ 897.4	+ 1037.7	+ 1389.4	+ 1634.6	+ 1385.9	+ 808.9
Mountain	+ 72.6	+ 206.6	+ 413.4	+ 525.6	+ 869.3	+ 965.9	+ 677.6
Pacific	+ 214.1	+ 316.1	+ 610.7	+ 749.9	+ 1575.9	+ 2047.9	+ 3246.9

* Source, Vol. II, Population, General Report, 15th Census of U.S., p. 146.

2. Inter-community migrations are taking place, but they are difficult to describe with any degree of exactness. The movement is extensive where much farm tenancy is found, for the tenancy system in America is conducive to frequent change of farm operators, involving more or less shifting of families from one locality or community to another.

The Fourteenth Census revealed the fact that 25 per cent of all farm operators had been on the farm operated but one year or less. Another 22.4 per cent had been on the same farm for from two to four years. A study made of tenants alone led to the estimate

that 26.9 per cent of them moved during that year from the farm they had been tilling to some other.³

In the Cotton Belt, where there is a high percentage of tenancy and share-cropping, the farm-to-farm movement is an annual event with a large percentage of the farm operators, as Figure 41 discloses. According to the 1935 Census of Agriculture 18 per cent of the Southern farm operators had occupied their farms for less than one year. Generally thruout the North there is less shifting. New England in the East has the least of all. On the average, not more than five or six farm operators out of 100 move annually in that area of little tenancy. However, plenty of scattered localities in other Northern states can be found where conditions are not so far behind the South.

The figures tell us to what extent there has been change of farm operators, but they do not inform us as to the distance moved. Hence we need more light on the subject, if we are to learn much about intercommunity shifting. It was found in Nebraska that about three times as many shifted from one farm to another within the same community as came from other communities. However, in some counties nearly half moved from one community to another. The Nebraska rate of change is believed to be less than in most other states, except those of New England and the Middle Atlantic group.⁴ L. C. Gray and others found in Kentucky and Tennessee that 56-67 per cent of the moves made by 1,093 farm operators during the years they had been farming had been within the confines of the same local community.⁵

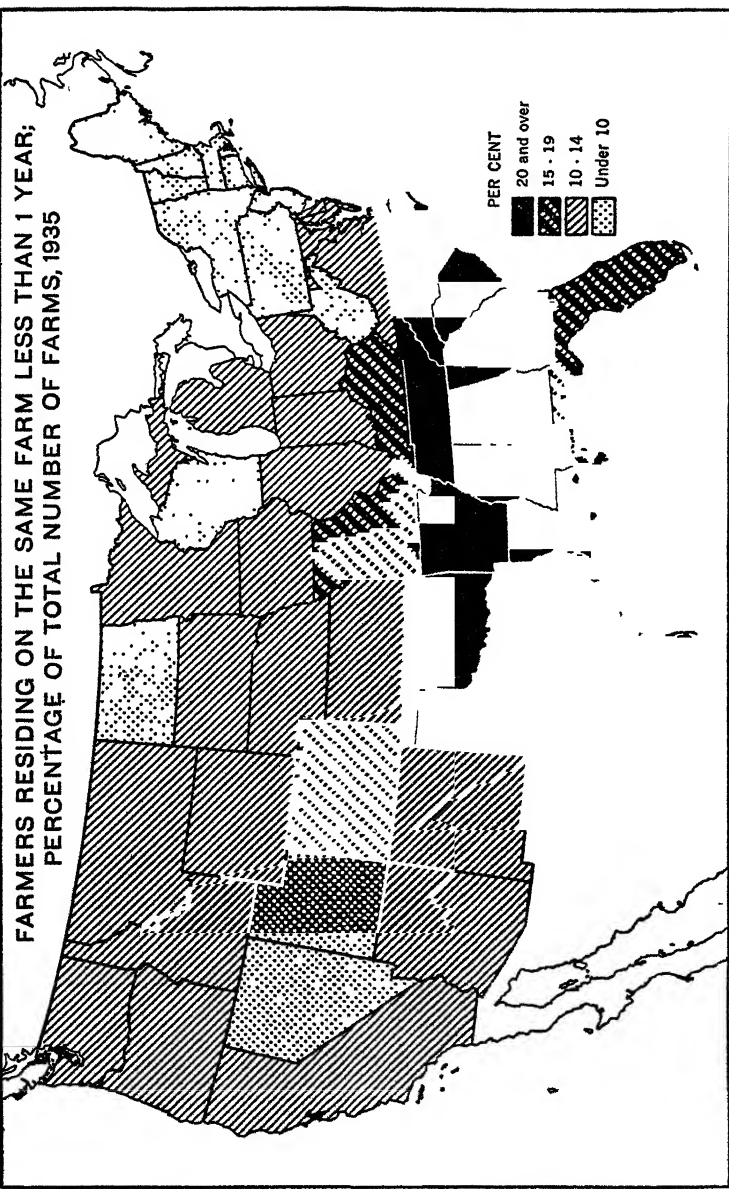
In four New York counties, the Interfarm mobility of 2,900 farm operators was found to be 31 per cent during the period 1925-1934. From 1925 to 1929 it was only 13 per cent, but from

³ C. L. Stewart, *Farm Occupancy, Ownership, and Tenancy and When Do Tenants Move*, Division of Land Economics, Bureau of Agr. Econ., United States Dept. Agr., Apr., 1923.

⁴ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Tenancy," *Bulletin 196* Agr. Exp. Station, University of Nebraska, Oct., 1923, pp. 19-20.

⁵ L. C. Gray and others, "Farm Ownership and Tenancy," *Yearbook of the U. S. Department of Agriculture* (1923), p. 597.

FARMERS RESIDING ON THE SAME FARM LESS THAN 1 YEAR;
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF FARMS, 1935



41. Showing Percentage of Farms in 1935 on Which the Operator Had Resided Less than 1 Year

Source: C. C. Taylor, Helen W. Wheeler, and E. L. Kirkpatrick, "Disadvantaged Classes in American Agriculture" *Social Research Report No. VIII*, U.S.D.A. and Farm Security Adm., April, 1938, p. 74.

1930 to 1934 it reached 18 per cent.⁶ Here again we are not informed how many farmers moved from one community to another.

In the South the movement of tenants and croppers is generally in a narrow area. In the Southwest, the distance moved becomes greater.

A study made by the Works Progress Administration of the distance moved by 1,830 South Carolina farmers showed that 84.4 per cent of the moves had been made within the county in which the farmers were living in 1933. There was some variation between classes, the white owners having made 85.2 per cent and the white tenants 80.2 per cent of their moves within the county; the Negro owners, 87.6 per cent, and the Negro tenants 88.3 per cent.⁷

3. Drift to Rural Villages. There is very little definite knowledge on this movement. However, during the first two decades of the century there was evidently a slow current of farm families moving to the villages. That the movement was equally manifest in every section of the land is doubtful. It was probably strongest in the Middle West. There it was not uncommon to find villages with ten to thirty-five or forty per cent of their population retired farm families.

The village of Mt. Horeb in Wisconsin, with a population of 1,350, in 1920 had 150 families of retired farmers. That meant 50 per cent or more of its total population.⁸

A study made by C. C. Zimmerman of the migration of 357 farm families from seven representative areas of Minnesota revealed that only 15 per cent went to the villages.⁹

According to the 1930 census, village population had increased during the decade in every division of states, while the rural farm population had decreased in all but three divisions. The total vil-

⁶ W. A. Anderson, "Inter-farm Mobility in New York State," *Rural Sociology*, Dec., 1937, pp. 392-401.

⁷ T. J. Woofter Jr., "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," Works Progress Administration *Research Monograph No. V*, 1936.

⁸ Erda Larson Turner, *Causes and Conditions of Retirement of Retired Farmers Living in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin*, Washington, D.C., March, 1926.

⁹ C. C. Zimmerman, "The Migration to Towns and Cities," *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 32, pp. 450-455.

lage increase was 3,616,000. That does not prove the gain came chiefly thru migrations from farms, tho no doubt these were an important source. However, it is possible that the farm-village movement was less during the twenties than it had been in the two preceding decades. Moreover, it is probable that owing to adverse economic conditions in agriculture fewer farmers are now retiring to take up residence in villages than at an earlier period. Nevertheless, in some areas, especially the Winter Wheat Region, it is reported that an increasing number of full-time farmers are living in villages. The increased use of power equipment is making this possible. Such farmers are known as "sidewalk farmers."¹⁰

Population Movements Between Rural and Urban Areas

1. Cityward drift of rural people is the most significant of all movements influencing country life. For forty years, this drift grew steadily in magnitude until it was looked upon as the chief agency in rural decline and city growth.

City drift is peculiar neither to America nor to our age. The problem bothered ancient Rome. Modern France, Germany, England, the Scandinavian countries and Russia have all experienced it as well as we. In fact, several rural populations of Europe have actually decreased in numbers since the middle of the last century, whereas with us it has not yet come to that pass except in a few states. In France the rural population fell off one-sixth and in England not less than one-third during the time indicated. Thus far in the United States as a whole the shrinkage has operated only to cut down the rate of increase in the rural districts; it has not decreased the total numbers.

The exact amount of city drift has not been determined. It can be approximated, however, with no great margin of error. According to the calculations of Professor J. M. Gillette the decade 1900-1910 saw some 3,637,000 people leave the country districts for the cities, while the succeeding decade saw a shift of 5,584,000. Gillette estimated that 84.1 per cent of the migrants were from

¹⁰ *Release June 22, 1939, U.S.D.A., p. 4.*

farms.¹¹ From 1910 to 1920 the annual drain of population from the country was more than equal to that required to build a Boston or San Francisco each year.¹²

During the decade 1920-1930 the rural exodus reached new heights. According to the estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, each of these years saw on the average about two million people leave the farms for towns and cities. The net migration amounted to 6,306,000.¹³ O. E. Baker put it at 5,898,000.¹⁴

Not until 1920 was the farm population counted by itself; consequently there is no way of knowing the exact situation, but there is some ground for believing that this population had been virtually at a standstill for nearly a quarter of a century. From about 1890 on it is likely that most of the surplus had migrated to the cities. The 1930 census compared with that of 1920 appears to verify this assumption.

It is estimated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics that the farm group suffered a net loss of 3.8 per cent during this ten year period, altho the rural non-farm gained, giving a total rural increase of 4.7 per cent for the decade.

In the light of Table 24, it appears that, beginning with 1930, the net farm exodus declined until in 1932 it was overbalanced by the city-country movement by 266,000. Altho in 1933 the net migration was again from the farms, the average yearly loss of the farm group has been below that of the twenties. It is clear that rural-urban migration rises and falls with the nation's business cycle.

Until the last decade, the rural decline was heaviest in the industrialized Northeastern and North Central states. Here rural population was stationary from 1900 to 1910, when it began to decline. The 1930 census revealed the South Atlantic division to be the heaviest loser, with the East North Central a close second, and the Middle Atlantic dropping to third place. Next in order

¹¹ J. M. Gillette, *Publications The American Sociological Society*, Vol. 19, p. 189.

¹² J. M. Gillette, *Ibid.*

¹³ *The Agricultural Situation*, Washington, D.C., November, 1932, p. 4.

¹⁴ *Recent Social Trends in the United States*, Part. I, pp. 110-111.

Table 24

ESTIMATED MOVEMENT TO AND FROM FARMS ^a

Year	From Farms to Cities, Towns and Villages	To Farm from Cities, Towns and Villages	NET MOVEMENT FROM	
			Cities, Towns and Villages to Farms	Farms to Cities, Towns and Villages
1920	896,000	560,000	.....	336,000
1921	1,323,000	759,000	.....	564,000
1922	2,252,000	1,115,000	.....	1,137,000
1923	2,162,000	1,355,000	.....	807,000
1924	2,068,000	1,581,000	.....	487,000
1925	2,038,000	1,336,000	.....	702,000
1926	2,334,000	1,427,000	.....	907,000
1927	2,162,000	1,705,000	.....	457,000
1928	2,120,000	1,698,000	.....	422,000
1929	2,081,000	1,604,000	.....	477,000
1930	1,823,000	1,611,000	.....	212,000
1931	1,566,000	1,546,000	.....	20,000
1932	1,511,000	1,777,000	266,000	.....
1933	1,225,000	944,000	.....	281,000
1934	1,051,000	700,000	.....	351,000
1935	1,211,000	825,000	.....	386,000
1936	1,166,000	719,000	.....	447,000
1937	1,160,000	872,000	.....	288,000
1938 ^b	1,000,000	825,000	.....	175,000
Total	31,149,000	22,959,000	266,000	8,456,000

^a *Farm Population Estimates January 1, 1938*, United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Release June 16, 1938.

^b Estimates for Jan. 1, 1939.

came the West North Central, East South Central, New England, and the Mountain states; the West South Central and the Pacific registered slight gains. In general, the heaviest rural exodus has been from areas relatively close to the migrant receiving cities.¹⁵

The rise of an extensive exodus from the rural South followed 1910. It embraced both white and colored farmers, who migrated to the cities of the South and North alike. Baker estimates that about 60 per cent of the net migration from the farms during the

¹⁵ C. E. Lively, "Migration and Population Adjustment in the Lake States Area," mimeographed circular, being a paper read before the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Population Association of America, Milwaukee, June, 1939, p. 3.

decade 1920-1930 was from the South.¹⁶ About one-third of it was to 12 northern cities.

The movement of Negroes was reflected in the fact that in 1920 there were 700,000 fewer engaged in agriculture than in 1910, and nearly 432,000 fewer in 1930 than in 1920. In the western and northern states, there dwelt in 1930 some 1,426,113 southern-born Negroes. In New England, the Middle Atlantic, East North Central, and West North Central divisions 737,423 southern-born Negroes were found in 1920 and 1,355,789 in 1930. Thus there were 618,366 migrants chiefly to urban centers in the decade.

Thus it appears, as Woofter remarks, "that the rural Negro from a home-loving, home-keeping race . . . has become the greatest wanderer among the restless groups of the United States."¹⁷

What class of country folk move to the city? This is a vital question. Very clearly, one class is the farm laborer. The Department of Agriculture estimated that in 1924 some 461,000 laborers moved from farms to cities. Some 352,000 of them returned again to the country, so that the net loss for the year amounted to 102,000. The gross movement of laborers to the cities constituted 22.2 per cent of the total rural exodus of men, women and children during that year. Similarly, this class constituted 25.1 per cent of those returning to the country.

It is a well-established fact that within the bounds of their native lands females migrate more frequently than do males. In the United States the stream that flows from country to town or city is a youth one composed of more females than males. Table 25 makes this clear. Zimmerman, for instance, found that of the farm operators' sons and daughters 18 years of age and over, nearly twice as many men as women were remaining on the farms of Minnesota.¹⁸ Dr. Warren H. Wilson found in a study of farm homes along a New Jersey highway that not one girl over 16 years of age remained at home. Some of the boys were there, but their sisters had gone to the cities.¹⁹

¹⁶ *Op Cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁷ T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Basis of Racial Adjustment*, Ginn and Co., 1925, p. 52.

¹⁸ Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, p. 455.

¹⁹ Warren H. Wilson, "The Restless Country Girl," *Homelands*, October, 1923.

Table 25

ESTIMATED PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS FROM FARMS, BY AGE AND SEX, 1920-1930^a

Age		Male	Female
1920	1930		
Total.	Number	2,805,000	3,368,500
	Per Cent	100	100
Under 5 years	10-14 years	5	6
5-9 years	15-19 years	7	13
10-14 years	20-24 years	25	25
15-19 years	25-29 years	26	20
20-24 years	30-34 years	13	9
25-29 years	35-39 years	6	4
30-34 years	40-44 years	4	3
35-39 years	45-49 years	3	3
40-44 years	50-54 years	1	3
45-49 years	55-59 years	2	3
50-54 years	60-64 years	2	3
55-59 years	65-69 years	2	3
60-64 years	70-74 years	2	2
65-69 years	75-79 years	2	3

Sources: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 1933, pp. 588-589; and Dorn, Harold F. and Lorimer, Frank, "Migration, Reproduction, and Population Adjustment," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November, 1936, p. 287.

^a B. L. Melvin and E. N. Smith, "Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects," W.P.A. *Research Monograph XV*, Washington, 1938, p. 8.

In addition to the vigorous vanguard of youth seeking careers, who under normal conditions constitute the main body migrating to the city, there are a few middle-aged and old people who go to retire and enjoy cultural advantages.

The types leaving the farm in the order of their going seem to be hired men, farm girls, farmers' sons, share tenants, cash tenants, and owner-operators.²⁰

2. The "Back-to-the-Land Movement." It has already been made clear by the data in Table 24 that the cityward drift is ac-

²⁰ Cf. Cornell Experiment Station *Bulletin No. 426*.

accompanied by a reverse movement from city to country. Some twenty-five years ago the Department of Agriculture gathered data on this movement.²¹ It concluded that the "Back-to-the-land Movement" was a very small item, giving in no wise any significant offset to the cityward trend.

However, the surveys of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics since 1920 have established the fact that the back-to-the-farm trend has become a very important phase of the migratory movement. It has, in truth, become a significant offset to the cityward drift. While during the 1920-1930 decade nearly two millions a year were moving to town, there was a counter-current of a million and a third back to the farms.²² Beginning with 1930 this counter-current became nearly equal in volume to the rural exodus, then overtook, and finally after 1932 lagged behind again. In contrast to the urbanward movement, which has been characterized as a migration of hopes, the depression "Back-to-the-land Movement" has been called a migration of despair.²³

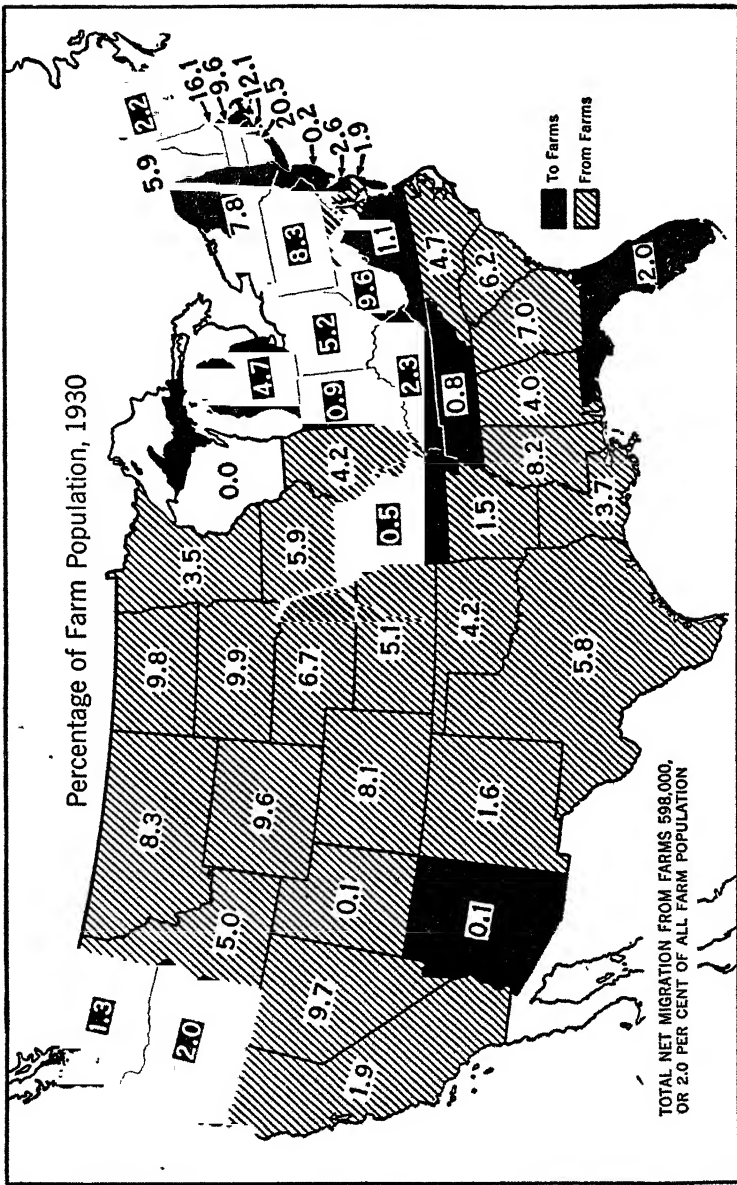
The great mobility of the rural population is a well established fact. Millions leave the country for the "industrial frontier" as once they migrated westward, and millions return again to the country after an interval of urban life. This exchange has reached enormous proportions, aggregating, it is estimated, some 32,000,000 during the twenties alone and from 1919 to 1939 not less than 53,000,000. Thus city and country are being tied together by a constant interchange of people and each segment of the social order is by this commerce exerting a profound cultural influence upon the other.

As one might expect, the general movement back to the land has been greatest in those sections where the cityward trend has been greatest. These, it will be recalled, were in the Mountain states, New England, the Pacific, Middle Atlantic, and East North Central groups. Many returned to the localities whence they had come, but in the depression years, when the return was greatest,

²¹ George K. Holmes, "Movement from City and Town to Farms," *Year Book of the Department of Agriculture*, 1914, pp. 257-274.

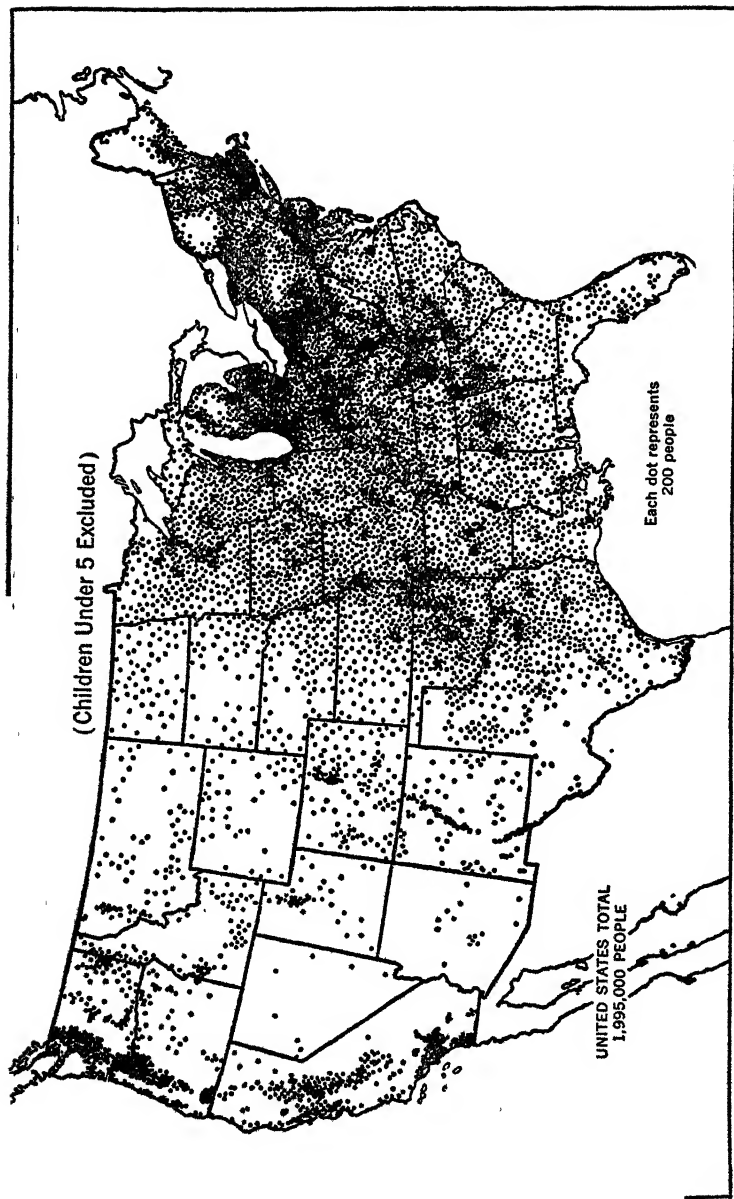
²² *The Agricultural Situation*, *op. cit.*

²³ Lively, *op. cit.*, p. 5.



42. Showing Net Migration to and from Farms, 1930-35

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, Nov., 1937, p. 31.



43. Showing Number of People over 5 Years of Age Living on a Farm Jan. 1, 1935, Who Had Not Dwelt on a Farm 5 Years Before

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, Nov., 1937, p. 33.

they went to the areas adjacent to the urban and industrial centers of their recent residence.²⁴

3. Immigration. Strictly speaking, immigration should not be discussed under the subdivisions of our topic dealing with population movements between urban and rural territory, and yet a considerable number of the alien born who find their way into the country districts of America do so after they have spent some time in our cities. Hence we may discuss the subject here.

The number of foreign born residing in the rural districts in 1920 was 3,419,750, or about 6.5 per cent of the rural population and 4.7 per cent of the farm population. By 1930 the number had fallen to 2,639,548 and to 4.9 and 3.6 per cent respectively. During the period 1900-1910 it is estimated that 1,290,000 immigrants settled in rural territory. At the same time some 294,000 are believed to have emigrated from the rural districts.²⁵ During the period 1910-1920 the number of immigrants into rural territory aggregated about 754,000.²⁶ The emigration during this decade was probably rather heavy, giving in consequence only a moderate net increase of rural population due to immigration.

After 1900 the country districts drew increasing numbers of the "new" immigrant stock. Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Jews, various minor Slavic elements, Italians and others found their way directly or indirectly thru our industrial cities into agricultural districts. Generally these people were born on the farms of the Old World. Upon coming to America immediate needs led them into industry and mining. But these occupations proved distasteful to them; hence they drifted into agriculture. This movement was mainly confined to the Northeastern states, viz., New England, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, and to the cut-over districts of several of the Great Lakes states. In sections of New England the new immigrant stock comprises half the population.

²⁴ C. E. Lively and Conrad Taeuber, "Rural Migrations in the United States," W.P.A. *Research Monograph XIX*, 1939, p. 37.

²⁵ J. M. Gillette, *Rural Sociology*, The Macmillan Co., 1925, p. 81.

²⁶ J. M. Gillette, *Publications of the American Sociological Society*, Vol. 19, p. 189.

The stock has experienced great difficulty in getting land and successfully establishing itself upon it. Perhaps the most successful group has been the Poles. They went onto the wild lands of Wisconsin, Texas, Missouri, the Dakotas, and Michigan as early as the fifties and sixties of the last century. During the last two or three decades, they have been acquiring the abandoned farms of the East, especially in the Connecticut Valley of New England. They have made good pioneers and have taken firm root as land-owners and land lovers.

The Italians, unlike the Poles, have not been good pioneers in American agriculture. However, they have planted a few colonies that are considered successful, notably those located in New Jersey, Arkansas, and Texas, and a small number scattered thru other southern states. Trucking, fruit raising, and cotton and sugar growing are their chief interests. There are also some settlements of them as market gardeners in New York.

Another group that has steadily grown in importance during the last twenty-five years is the Jewish farmers. The Jewish Agricultural Society reported in 1925 a Jewish farm population of 75,000 scattered thruout 39 states and working more than 1,000,000 acres of land. By far the larger part of this group is found in New York, New Jersey, and New England. It is composed chiefly of Russian, Galician, and Rumanian Jews. Of late an increasing number of Jewish refugees have gone into these communities.

Other new immigrants in agriculture are a few Bohemians, chiefly in Nebraska and Texas; a few Slovaks in Arkansas and Connecticut; and a small number of Portuguese, in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.²⁷ In this group belong the Mexicans, who came in considerable volume after 1900. By 1920 they numbered 700,541 and by 1930 some 1,422,533. Not all of this element in our population were immigrants nor were all farmers. In fact, only a few were settled on the land. The vast majority were agricultural laborers on the ranches of Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado.

The Japanese are another immigrant group, mostly in Cali-

²⁷ J. W. Jenks and W. J. Lauck, *The Immigrant Problem*, pp. 80-103.

fornia, with a few in Florida and Texas. In California they do not exceed 40,000 people all told. In 1920 they owned some 74,769 acres and operated an additional 383,287 acres.²⁸

For several of the groups mentioned there are societies engaged in promoting settlements on the land. This is true of the Jewish and Slavic groups in particular.

The inflow of aliens has, of course, been checked by restrictive immigration laws. Naturally, this has affected the rural districts along with the urban and probably much more severely. In the period 1915-1919, 27.1 per cent of the incoming aliens went directly into rural communities.²⁹ Under the quota law of 1924, very few Europeans have come. However, during the decade of the twenties there were many immigrants from Canada and Mexico, especially from the latter country into the Southwestern states.

Causal Factors in Population Movements

The causes of population shiftings within rural territory are primarily economic. The eastern pioneers and homesteaders who trekked westward from the beginning of the Republic until well into the nineties of the last century, were motivated above all by the lure of cheap land. The reverse movement from the West to the East which began to manifest itself with the beginning of the present century had a similar cause. When free land became exhausted and the price of prairie farms began to climb in value, farmers began to sell their dear land and move on to cheaper soil farther East. Thus land values have been an important factor in causing migration. They have influenced movement not only within rural territory, but out of it as well. The poor land areas have probably contributed more than their proportional share to the urban drift.³⁰ Good land areas have often done the same. C. E. Lively has shown that good and poor areas in Ohio contributed about

²⁸ R. L. Buell, "Japanese Immigration," *World Peace Foundation Pamphlet*, 1924, p. 285.

²⁹ *Fourteenth Census*, Vol. II, p. 778.

³⁰ Goodrich and others, *Migration and Economic Opportunity*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936, Chapter IX.

equally to the rural exodus from 1715 to 1930.³¹ In the one case lack of opportunity on the land has driven people out and in the other case a high standard of living and prosperity have induced migration.

Yet land values do not fully account for the constant intercommunity movement of farm operators. That is largely due to unrest and instability. Both landlords and tenants easily become dissatisfied and act upon the feeling that any change offers a chance to better the situation. Hence "changing tenants" and "changing farms" are early springtime practices. In the South and Southwest, where the tenant system is most extensive, the class that has no capital moves most often, hoping in vain somehow to improve its lot.

The movement to rural villages some years ago seems to have had a strong social motive behind it. The family often moved to secure better school and church advantages afforded by the trade centers. Generally it meant an absentee landlord class who kept in pretty close touch with the farm. In large part it represented a class who had reached the age where a little let up on strenuous labor was desired. These retired farmers were often referred to as "tired" farmers.

The early thirties saw many farmers drifting to the villages because they had lost their farms from mortgages and transfer. In the South many croppers lost out because of the depression and moved to the villages hoping to find work.

The study of the cause of retirement in the case of Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, already referred to, probably gave a fair insight into the situation before the depression. Of the 100 farmers moving to the village all but 5 had been owner-operators. Four had been tenant-operators and one had managed a farm his children had inherited. The ratio between owners and tenants is probably characteristic of retired farmers in villages.

The following table gives a complete analysis of the reasons given for retiring.

³¹ C. E. Lively, "The Development of Research in Rural Migration in the United States," *Mimeograph circular*, Ohio State Univ., 1937.

Table 26

REASONS FOR RETIRING FROM FARM^a

REASONS	REPORTING NUMBER
1. Old age	5
2. Had saved enough to take things easier	49
3. Son or daughter wanted to take farm and father could not manage alone, so left it to them and moved to town	35
4. Farm help hard to get	27
5. Had no children (no sons, 6)	9
6. Help in house hard to get	12
7. Children grew up and left home	14
8. Children were in school	4
9. Children needed school opportunities in town	13
10. Children did not want to stay on farm	7
11. Ill health in family	51
Man	26
Wife	22
Children	3
12. Death in family	7
Man	2
Wife	2
Children	3
13. Other business interests took time	3
14. Friends and relatives coaxed him to town	2
15. Dissatisfied with farming	7

^a Turner, *op. cit.*

In this connection it is interesting to note that 41 of the 100 farmers either sold or rented their farms to sons or daughters. Six others turned them over to other relatives. The other 48 disposed of their farms to non-relatives, 23 selling and 25 renting.

It appears that old age was not a large factor in retirement. Three moved to the village before they were 35; four at 70 years. The majority moved between the ages of 50 and 59 years.

The movement of population out of rural territory, or the city drift, obviously has a variety of causes. Insofar as it is a movement of families, the motives do not differ much from those in-

volved in the shift to rural villages. The following analysis of the causes assigned by 732 families, in a survey made at Fort Collins, Colorado, for their leaving the country for the city gives a fair idea of the forces at work.⁸²

20	moved to get better home conveniences
16	" " " " church opportunities
42	" " " " social advantages
182	" " " " educational facilities
214	" " " " economic opportunities
236	" because of ill health in the family
22	" " " " parents' age.

A third of the causes were obviously social in character. The inadequacy of rural institutions in the field of education, religion, and recreation is an expulsive influence of importance. Many feel the need of a more fully organized social environment, such as the cities offer. As a consequence there is a disposition to look upon the country as merely a place of sojourn while means are being accumulated on which to go to the city to live and establish a permanent home. Thus, the Country Life Commission asked certain Iowa farmers who had been called into the hearings at Davenport what was wrong with rural conditions in their state. "Not a thing," they replied, "farmers are making money and land values are going up. The average farmer can retire and move to town when he is fifty." This reply probably expresses a widely prevalent social dissatisfaction that once motivated a considerable portion of the urbanward drift. Today relatively few farmers are able to retire and live on their capital. A prolonged depression in agriculture has greatly changed the situation.

The relative isolation and lack of many and varied social contacts in the rural community pall upon certain types of people. They feel that as between country and city it is a choice of sociological poverty or riches, and what promises to be riches wins. Often the city does not give what they expected, but, when all is said, the advantages of the city do outweigh those of the country in the estimation of the vast majority who resort thither.

⁸² *Farmer's Wife*, October, 1924.

The second third of the cases in the study before us found themselves in the city because of the ill health or old age of some member of the family. Translated into other terms, this probably signifies inability to carry on the farming process and so means, as a rule, the operation of economic pressure. The last third of the cases specifically assign better economic opportunities in the city as the cause for leaving the farm.³³ More certain and steady employment at nominally higher wages than in the country was once to be counted on in the city. Then too work is easier, hours shorter, and conditions are often more congenial and stimulating. Moreover, the responsibilities are generally lighter and the uncertainties fewer. And not the least advantage is the opportunity for a more satisfactory expenditure of leisure hours. So, it was said, "The weekly pay roll of the factories has spoiled more farmers than the prices for farm products."³⁴ The reasonable assurance of a fair and regular income, even tho it be a mere wage, loomed large over against little or no income at all, as might be the case in a good proportion of the years when one has to run the risk of flood, frost, drought, storm, chinchbug, boll-weevil, hog-cholera, army worm, grasshoppers, or ruinously low prices.

During the greater part of the decade ending with 1930, the farm laborer was enticed to the city by exceptionally favorable conditions in the industrial field. The restriction of foreign immigration tended to create a labor shortage in urban industry. At the same time the agricultural depression made farm work decidedly unprofitable and unattractive; hence there was a rapid movement of wage earners out of the country districts.

Some of the causal forces of city drift lost power with the coming of the depression. Economic opportunity in the city was no longer what it had been and fewer people were enticed away from the country.

³³ A mimeographed bulletin entitled, *Analysis of Migration of Population to and from Farms*, from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, under date of October, 1927, gives data on 2,745 farm operators who left farms for urban areas. It reveals about the same causal forces at work as have been pointed out here with a little more direct emphasis placed on retirement because "economically able."

³⁴ *North Carolina Year Book*, 1922, p. 31.

The cause of the main exodus, that of the adolescent, was a necessity under conditions where a surplus population was constantly being generated. That surplus had either to migrate or remain on the land and exist on a lower plane of living. Once it found an outlet on the frontiers of the West. When they vanished, urban centers furnished a new frontier and youth turned cityward to seek careers and fortune. Greeley's famous advice, "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country," was superseded by the admonition, "Go to the city, young man, and get a job."

However, lack of opportunity for surplus youth in the country did not entirely account for the exodus of all. The dullness of the farm or village community, coupled with the natural craving of youth for exciting stimulation, has played an essential part. Then a flood of suggestions deluged them to turn them toward the city. The farmer is likely to be a chronic grumbler about his exceptionally hard and toilsome lot and to think meanly of his occupation. His children's attitudes are conditioned by this outlook and they inevitably take an unfavorable view of farm life. Moreover, rural education, until of late, has been so thoroly urban in emphasis that it was more certain to give the child a bent away from the farm than toward it. Above all, the direct appeals of the city thru the press, the "movie," the radio, advertising agencies, amusements, commercial opportunities and other attractions have been suggestive forces which the country could not counteract.³⁵

When city jobs are as scarce as they have been for a decade, the youth back up on the farms and in the country villages. Not only is there no longer any frontier but the mechanization of agriculture is constantly lessening farm labor opportunities. Thus country-born youth face a dilemma.

Due largely to mechanical processes farm production seems to have increased over 40 per cent in the past 30 years. "From 1909 to 1929," observes a recent report, "the output per person working in agriculture increased approximately 37 per cent. This increased productivity made it possible for 7.5 fewer persons to pro-

³⁵ See E. R. Groves, *The Rural Mind and Social Welfare*, pp. 55-65.

duce an agricultural output which was 27 per cent greater in 1929 than in 1909." ³⁶

There is thus a constant tendency for farms to produce more than the cities can consume. A surplus of commodities that cannot be marketed results. To quote from another government report: "In 1787, the year the Constitution was framed, the surplus food produced by 19 farmers went to feed one city person. In recent average years 19 people on farms have produced enough food for 56 non-farm people, plus ten people living abroad." ³⁷ When the cities cannot consume the surplus and foreign markets shrink to the vanishing point, technological agricultural improvement becomes a serious menace to the farm population.

Until recently the cities afforded an outlet for the growing farm population surplus. But since they themselves have developed a surplus population, they have ceased to offer opportunities for an increasing number of workers, and the rural population is confronted with an acute problem of readjustment. There is some evidence that it is meeting it by cutting the birth-rate, by turning from commercialized to subsistence or self-sufficient farming, and by lowering the standard of living. Unfortunately the areas whence the urbanward movement was heaviest during 1920 to 1930 were those where the natural increase was highest and living conditions the worst. By grouping the counties according to the rural plane of living index Lively and Taeuber found that as the "index decreased, with one exception, the net rate of migration from rural areas increased." ³⁸ These areas are largely those given to subsistence farming in the Cut-over regions around the Great Lakes, the Southeastern Cotton Belt and the Appalachian Mountains.

It is pertinent to inquire specifically as to the causes of the back-to-the-country movement.

³⁶ E. A. Shaw and J. A. Hopkins, "Trends in Employment in Agriculture 1909-36," W.P.A. *National Research Project A-8 in Philadelphia*; 1938.

³⁷ S. H. McCrary, R. F. Henderson, and Committee, *Technological Trends and National Policy*, National Resource Committee, Section on Agriculture.

³⁸ C. E. Lively and Conrad Taeuber, "Rural Migration in the United States," W.P.A. *Research Monograph XIX*, 1939, p. 74.

One study made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in 1926-1927 of a random sample of 1,168 persons who had left cities, towns, or villages for farms, revealed the fact that 86.7 per cent had either been brought up on farms or had had some previous farm experience.³⁹ Another study, made in 1929 of 10,000 cases, showed that either husband or wife or both in 87 per cent of the families had originated on farms and 77 per cent had previously engaged in agriculture.⁴⁰ The main reasons given for returning were that they could save more money on the farm in 16 per cent of the cases, work too uncertain and hard in 14 per cent, preference for the independence of farm life in 10 per cent, dislike of city in 20 per cent, and city unfit place for rearing children and country more healthful in 27 per cent.⁴¹

These instances may be viewed as normal cases in normal times. Many of them were probably the children or other relatives of farmers who while living in cities fell heir to farms thru the death of country kinsmen. Their return was therefore to claim a rural heritage. Among those who assigned reasons of dislike of city, many failures were doubtless to be found. When times become abnormal in urban centers, many unemployed return to the country. Those who do so have probably migrated from the country in former years and are returning again only because they cannot make a living in the city. Not all, perhaps not even the majority, come back to engage in commercial agriculture; they simply take refuge on the land, often in the environs of villages, engage in gardening, or do whatever they can as a temporary means of living. Many have gone on relief. Even during the decade 1920-1930 the rural non-farm population grew by means of net migration as much as 1.7 per cent. Since 1930 the villages seem to have grown at an increased rate by this migration.⁴² There is thus a back-to-the-land movement as well as back-to-the-farm movement induced or considerably accelerated by the depressed conditions of urban industry.⁴³

³⁹ *Analysis of Migration*, mimeographed bulletin cited.

⁴⁰ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Lively and Taeuber, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁴³ *The Agricultural Situation*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Effects of Population Movements on Rural Society

1. *The movements of people within rural territory* from one state or community to another have both good and evil consequences. It is often good for the individual or the family, for thus may they better their situation. The shifting of tenants insofar as it is from poorer to better farms is advantageous for those making the shift. In a sense rural society has thus been given a fluidity which presents a wholesome contrast to the relative fixity and stagnation of much Old World country life.

On the whole, however, the evil effects outweigh the good. There is a class whose unfortunate lot tends ever to be worsened by their many wanderings. They are seen today in the semi-desert regions of the West and Far West,—people who have been unable to adjust themselves. In the new and harder country to which they have turned they are trying again without much hope or chance of success. The tragedy of these marginal countrymen is made doubly tragic by their wandering proclivities. This, however, is only one result. The instability and insecurity of the rural community is another. People must have a permanent stake and an abiding interest in the community if adequate schools, churches and other institutions and organizations, together with a wholesome moral life, are to flourish. It is a matter of common knowledge that the presence of a numerous transient tenant class causes everything of a permanent social nature to slump.

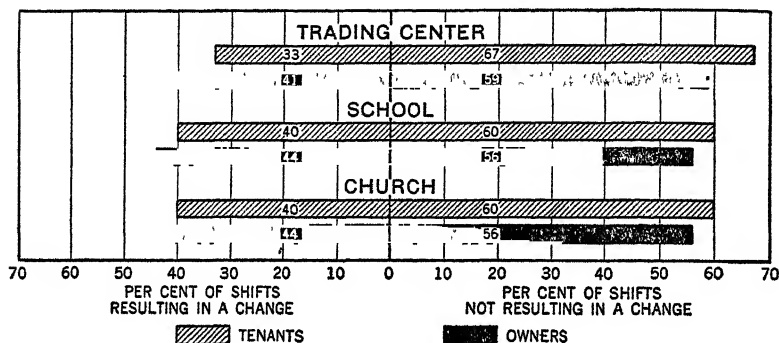
Professor Cooley has stressed the demoralizing influences of social disorganization and instability. After pointing out how important it is for the moral health of the individual to have intimate association with primary groups, he says:

“When we move to town or go to another country or from our former associates, it is not at all certain that we shall form new relations equally intimate and cogent with the old. A common result, therefore, is a partial moral isolation and atrophy of the moral sense. If the causes of change are at all general, we may have great populations made up largely of such dispersed units, a kind of ‘anarchy of spirits,’ among whom there is no ethics or settled system

of moral life at all, only a confused outbreak of impulses, better or worse.”⁴⁴

This can easily be overemphasized, for a certain amount of displacement or disorganization is wholesome. But the harmful effects of the prevailing rural instability cannot be overlooked.

2. *The coming of the newer immigrants* into the country districts, whether directly from abroad or by way of a few years' experience in urban industry, often means community disorganization.



44. Percentages of Cases in Which Established Community Relationships Were Broken as a Result of Removals to Other Farms by Tenants and Owner Farmers, Selected Areas in Kentucky and Tennessee, 1919-1920

Source: L. C. Gray, Charles L. Stewart, Howard A. Turner, J. T. Sanders, and W. J. Spillman, "Farm Ownership and Tenancy," *United States Department of Agriculture Yearbook*, 1923, p. 597.

Ignorant of our language, our agricultural lands and methods, the alien not infrequently falls an early victim to his mistakes and to the exploiter's cunning. In New England and the Middle Atlantic states he has often paid exorbitant prices for abandoned land, only to find that even with the low standard of living of peasants and with the labor of women and children fully utilized, he cannot make a living on it. Such failures are deplorable in the extreme, involving the loss of hard earned savings and plunging the losers into despairing poverty. Insofar as the community is concerned,

⁴⁴ Charles H. Cooley, *The Social Process*, pp. 180-181.

the influence of a low standard one is always demoralizing. Moreover, the immigrant class has been found difficult to enlist in any coöperative enterprises. The barriers of race prejudice and the language rise as dividing walls within the community to lower its tone and hinder its improvement.

3. *The exodus from the country* affects it in various ways. The community is often weakened thereby. It means the upsetting of the social composition, giving a preponderance of males in the country and an abnormal age distribution. In wide stretches of New England and the East such consequences have long been apparent. They have become manifest in localities of the Middle West also. The moral tone suffers as Professor E. A. Ross has vividly stated in the following:

"The continual departure of young people who would in time have become leaders results eventually in a visible moral decline of the community. The roads are neglected, which means less social intercourse and a smaller turnout to school and church and public events. School buildings and grounds deteriorate, and the false idea takes root that it pays to hire the cheaper teacher. The church gets into a rut, fails to start up the social and recreative activities which bind the young people to it, and presently ceases to be a force. Frivolity engrosses the young because no one organizes singing schools, literary societies, or debating clubs. Presently a generation has grown up that has missed the uplifting and refining influence of these communal institutions. There is a marked decline in standards of individual and family morality."⁴⁵

Beyond a moral slump to institutional breakdown the effects have reached. There are thousands of abandoned churches and schools, and other thousands are on the verge of being abandoned in communities depleted by the rural exodus.

One of the causes of this breakdown is the transfer of rural wealth as well as people to urban centers. O. E. Baker estimates that from 1920 to 1930 the settlement of farm estates transferred from \$4,000,000,000 to \$5,000,000,000 to heirs who had moved to the cities. In addition, he reckons the investment of rural society

⁴⁵ E. A. Ross, *Publications of the American Sociological Society*, Vol. XI, p. 27.

in the 6,300,000 migrants which were lost to the cities to be \$14,000,000,000. This is calculated on the assumption that it cost on the average \$2,250 to rear and educate each person to the age of 15 years. This sum is equal to one-third of the annual earnings of agriculture and was urban gain at rural expense.

More serious is the possible loss of quality in the stock sifted by migration. It has long been held that those with push and initiative migrate, while the less enterprising and more mediocre are left behind.

There are localities near to and far away from the great cities that appear to be drained out stagnant pools from the exodus of population. One sees them in the remote hill towns of New England and now and then in sections of the Middle West.

A recent study by C. F. Reuss of the selective influence of migration for a thirty-year period makes it clear that the effects are not everywhere the same. They vary with at least three types of areas. From the country adjacent to small cities it was the upper class that left most, with the middle class second in order, and the lower classes last. Regions affected by industrial developments also yielded up the best class and showed a gain of 15 per cent in the middle class, with the heaviest depletion in the lower class stock. Areas remote from cities and industrial developments showed the heaviest drain on the upper class, with the middle class second, while the lowest class increased by 12 per cent.⁴⁶

Altho Reuss' study tends to confirm the belief that the exodus of the best stock from the country is heavier than that of other classes, more definite proof of it seems to have been furnished by an investigation made by Gist and Clark of the selective influence of migration on 2,544 high school students living on farms and in villages under 1,000 population in forty Kansas counties.⁴⁷ These students were given Terman's intelligence test in 1922-1923. Thirteen years later their place of residence was determined in order

⁴⁶ C. F. Reuss, "A Qualitative Study of Depopulation in Remote Rural Districts: 1900-1930," *Rural Sociology*, March, 1917, pp. 66-75.

⁴⁷ N. P. Gist and C. D. Clark, "Intelligence As a Selective Factor in Rural-Urban Migrations," *American Journal of Sociology*, July, 1938, pp. 36-58.

to discover what types had migrated and what had remained in the country.

Of the original number tested 1,783 were found to have migrated to other localities, 964 of them to urban centers, and 819 to some other rural community. The remaining 761 still lived in the communities where they had originated. The following table gives the I.Q. rating, and the urban and rural distribution of the entire group after the lapse of thirteen years.

Table 27

SUMMARY OF DISTRIBUTION OF INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS
OF 2,544 FORMER RURAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
CLASSIFIED AS TO URBAN, RURAL NON-FARM,
AND RURAL FARM RESIDENCE ^a

I.Q.	URBAN		RURAL	NON-FARM	RURAL	FARM
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Under 95	378	39.21	387	47.72	445	58.88
95-104	326	33.82	250	30.80	222	28.87
105 and Over	260	26.97	174	21.46	102	13.25
	964	100.00	811	100.00	769	100.00

^a *Ibid.*, p. 47.

It is apparent from these data that those who migrated to urban areas were of superior intelligence. The modal I.Q. class of the urban dwellers fell in the 95-105 interval, while that of the rural dwellers fell in the 85-94 interval. Moreover, 52.66 per cent of those remaining in rural districts had I.Q.'s below 95, as compared with 39.21 per cent of the urban migrants. Similarly, in the I.Q. class above 105 the urban group had 26.97 per cent of its total cases, while the rural had only 17.47 per cent.⁴⁸

The 964 urban migrants were classified according to the size of the cities in which they resided. It was discovered that the tendency was for intelligence to be graduated upward as the size of the city increased. The "large communities tended to attract a disproportionate share of superior persons in the total sample."⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

Thus in cities of 2,500 to 9,999 population 22.48 per cent of the migrants fell in the 105 I.Q. group; in cities of 10,000 to 24,999 population, 27.68 per cent; in cities of 25,000 to 99,999 population, 27.39 per cent; and in cities of over 100,000 population, 29.14 per cent.⁵⁰

The method employed in this investigation was scientifically sound and the findings must be accepted as accurate. Therefore, insofar as this sample goes, it is clear that rural-urban migration has selected a disproportionate number of people above average ability as ability is measured by mental tests. If the sample typifies what has been happening in the whole country, the rural exodus would seem indeed to have been highly disadvantageous to rural society. The loss of a large proportion of the best qualified leadership would account for much of the persistent conservatism and the lack of effective organization in the rural community. Sociologically this is serious enough, but it does not signify biological depletion of the stock. It means at most social impoverishment or perhaps social degradation,—results sufficiently evil in themselves,—without genetic degeneration, of which there is no evidence. The authors of the study cited, while calling attention to the sociological consequences of selective migration, go on to state: "Such selection does not necessarily have any genetic significance. That is to say, the progeny of the rural population may be quite as adequately endowed by nature as the children of the urban migrants."⁵¹

Their conclusions on this point are fully supported by genetic science. The stock left behind in the country will produce just as capable offspring as tho no selective migration had occurred. It cannot, therefore, be said that the rural-urban exodus has tended to drain the country of the genetically best.

Whether these limited inquiries present a true picture of the general situation or not, there is no way of knowing. It is probable that the selective factors vary more or less in nature, force, and consequences from community to community.⁵² If so, the current gen-

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁵² Otto Klineberg, *Negro Intelligence and Selective Migration*, Columbia University Press, 1935, pp. 61-62.

eralizations relative to the selective influence of migration may be largely erroneous.

Even tho the migrants have the highest I.Q.'s, it does not necessarily follow that the country has lost those who are the all-around best for rural society. The migrants may be the "potentially distinguished youth with promise of ardent life, fame and fortune" for the city but not for the country. Thus Professor Hornell Hart says, "As distinguished from older migration to the frontier, migration to cities apparently selects especially those potentially distinguished in intellectual pursuits. In the frontier days the pioneers reproduced much more rapidly than the less aggressive persons left behind; hence early migration was eugenic in its effects. Recent native migrations with their cityward trend tend to leave fewer children than the individuals left behind in rural districts. Hence modern migration tends to be dysgenic in its effects." ⁵³

Perhaps cityward migration, in selecting those distinguished for intellectuality, takes the aggressive, venturesome, reckless, and those of an exploitive nature. If so, those who are left behind on the farms may tend to be the more persistent, productive, steady, careful, and peace-loving types. In other words, it may be only the extremes that are drawn to the cities while the country retains the means or averages. In that case, the effect would not necessarily be harmful, but would be only to differentiate an urban and a rural type, giving our cities the aggressive, exploitive, and dominating individuals and the country the more contented, submissive, and stable sort. If each type is needed in both urban and rural society, the value of such a differentiating process may be doubted. It tends to upset the social balance. In such an upsetting the country may be the loser and the city the gainer, for there is added to the things that make for urban ascendancy one more element of power at the expense of the country. Thus rural society may be weakened in ability to protect itself from complete subordination and exploitation by the city.

If rural-urban migration is pulling out of the country youth with

⁵³ Hornell Hart, *op. cit.*, pp. 80, 129.

the highest I.Q.'s, or the best equipped educationally,⁵⁴ there is also evidence that the areas of heaviest migration are definitely marginal ones incapable of rearing and equipping capable recruits for urban life. Thus it is possible that in the aggregate the rural-urban migrants do not average exceptionally high in capability or education. If they do not, the cities are deriving no great benefits from the movement. In fact, they may be in many respects the losers, as the following statement suggests:

"Each new generation of Americans is tending to be disproportionately recruited from areas with low standards of living and inferior educational resources. The constant stream of migrants to urban areas from marginal mountain and coastal areas in the North, from the Southern Appalachian area, and from marginal cotton lands, enforced by current reproduction trends, is steadily working to counteract the educational efforts now long made in American cities."⁵⁵

Other effects of town and city drift are seen in the growth of tenantry and absentee landlordism with all the attendant evils. The land owner in town loses interest in the welfare of the rural community, and the tenant, because he has no permanent stakes in the community, is slow to acquire any social interest. Moreover, between the older land-owning class who still remain in the community and the newly formed tenant group there tends to develop social cleavage. This fact has been brought out by numerous surveys. For instance, the church of the old families is woefully indifferent to and neglectful of the tenant class. Too often the tenant is unwelcome. He is thus not assimilated into the community life. This is even more the case with the migratory labor families. Such disturbance of community homogeneity hinders any unity of action and thwarts desirable social developments.

⁵⁴ See E. C. Young, "The Movement of Farm Population," Cornell University Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 426*; C. E. Lively and P. G. Beck, "Movement of Open Country Population in Ohio," Ohio State University, *Rural Sociology Monographs*, No. 3, Jan., 1928, pp. 35-36.

⁵⁵ Frank Lorimer and Frederick Osborn, *Dynamics of Population*, The Macmillan Co., 1934, p. 345; see also C. E. Lively and Conrad Taeuber, "Rural Migration in the United States," *Research Monograph XIX*, 1939, p. 130.

The other side of this story has to do with those who are returning to the country, especially those who have returned since 1929. Many rural communities have become overburdened with them, for not infrequently they constitute an impoverished and demoralized class. They are migrants of despair. Country villages have consequently had to face new and serious problems of cost of schools, public service, and poor relief. Extensive social maladjustment has thus been added to the many ills that afflict the countryside. Moreover, the future prospects of our agricultural civilization are jeopardized by this back-wash to the land if it means a permanent increase of the farm population. For unless there is an industrial and urban expansion far beyond anything that is probable, the farms of America cannot sustain more people at a high standard of living. National and world economy, in fact, seem to require diminishing numbers in agriculture. Certainly there is no opportunity for growing numbers in commercial farming. If, therefore, the farm population is to grow, much of it will have to exist on a self-sufficient kind of agriculture. That will mean that the general standard of living for farmers as a class will gravitate to levels that have hitherto prevailed only among exploited tenants. We shall then have a degraded peasantry on the soil and a low level of rural civilization.

Remedial Measures

Perhaps one would be a system of taxation tending to discourage large-scale capitalistic industrial agriculture. It would prevent many from being "tractored-off" the land and secure more opportunities for rural labor.

Another remedy is available in the coöperative farm credit system under the Farm Credit Administration. In 1917, 12 Federal land banks were established to finance farm mortgages. Subsequently the government credit service was broadened to cover short-term production loans and advances to coöperatives for purchasing, marketing, and supplying various other services, including even the purchase of land and the establishment of communities. At present a million farmers are beneficiaries. Probably close to three-

fourths of the farm-loan business is now done by the Federal Government. At least one-fourth of the farm mortgage indebtedness is in its hands. How far this system will prevent bankruptcy in agriculture, help renters to become farm owners, and tend to keep the rural population on the soil, remains to be seen. It has helped the land owner more than any other class. In the South, where large numbers of share tenants and croppers are held in debt bondage that virtually amounts to peonage simply because the local credit system makes them wholly dependent on the landlords, there are large possibilities for the development of coöperative credit organizations that will emancipate the tenant. Incidentally, credit facilities of this sort may aid in stabilizing conditions.

Again, something might be done by way of reforming our laws directly governing tenantry, so as to foster long term leases. Whatever did this would help to reduce the shifting from place to place of large numbers of soil tillers.

For much of the city drift there is scarcely any remedy except birth control. If and when a balance of births and deaths is reached, there will be population stabilization and much less shifting. However, economic and occupational interests are generally at all times and under all circumstances best served where there is the freest movement to and fro between city and country. And even with a stabilized population this would continue to some extent, particularly since neither industry nor agriculture is stabilized.

That part of the rural exodus which is motivated by the superior cultural advantages of the city can be stopped only by building a rural civilization equal to that of urban centers. To do that is a big order not in prospect of fulfillment. Nevertheless, such a culture has been approximated elsewhere, and why not in America? Here is a challenge to restless and ambitious countrymen who go in search of the ideal somewhere beyond the environment with which they are most familiar. Time was in the old New England community and in the neighborhoods of the ante-bellum South when there was a more or less distinctive and commendable rural culture. One finds it in parts of the Old World today.

Many agencies are working for the betterment of rural society.

Here and there creditable results are being achieved. Communities there are that approach the ideal in that they are meeting the demands that must be met by every community if it is to hold its own against the allurements of the city. However, it is only as the country people themselves catch a vision of a better community and command the agencies that will enable them to realize it that the better community can be secured. There is no social legislation, voluntary organization, or government that is going to do it for them. Inspiration may come from above and round about, but the achievement must come from within the community itself.

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Topics for Discussion

1. A generation ago one phase of the rural problem was how to keep the boys on the farm. Today one of the most important problems is to find opportunities for boys off the farms. What has caused the change?
2. What class of people during the last 25 years have left the rural neighborhood with which you are familiar? Where did they go? Who took their places? What has been the effect on the neighborhood socially?
3. When the Country Life Commission made its study it found Mid-Western farmers looking forward to retiring and moving to town when they were 50 or a little more. Has anything intervened to alter this attitude? If so, what?
4. Is rural mobility generally increasing or decreasing and why?
5. Agriculture appears to be undergoing a revolution thru mechanization. What effect is this likely to have on population mobility?

6. How would large-scale agriculture influence population mobility?
7. Should rural-urban migration be considered a loss or gain for the country? Back up your answer with reasons.
8. In the rural neighborhood with which you are acquainted, how many of the resident families were there in 1900? How many occupy the same farms?
9. What shape does the population pyramid take where there is marked (1) emigration? (2) immigration?

Part IV

THE MATERIAL ELEMENT

FARMERS' WEALTH AND INCOME

Material Resources

SOCIOLOGY is the study of society, or human grouping. But what is a society, or a human group? It is obviously first of all a multiple number of persons who in either temporary or more or less permanent association carry on together. But human society is always more than just a multiple number of persons acting in concert, else it would not be distinguished from mere animal aggregation. Men bring along something besides themselves when they associate. Other animals do not bring anything else. These extra-personal factors are just as much elements or constituent parts of society as are persons. Without them there is no human grouping.

What are these extra-personal elements? They are the various forms of culture. The material form, or wealth, is one. It represents whatever is created by human labor or humanly directed labor, affording protection, comfort and satisfaction, and means to power. All human societies have more or less wealth, representing largely the stored-up energies of dead ancestors. We shall then treat of wealth as an element of rural society, and in this chapter of the durable wealth and income of the farmer, the problem he faces in producing them, and the position in which he is placed as a class by virtue of the nature and limitations of his material resources.

Producing Wealth

Wealth production from the land, when contrasted with most other forms of production, has certain peculiarities. Some of these are matters of common observation; others, less obvious; but the bearing of all upon our problem should be considered.

1. Agriculture, to begin with, is wealth-creating in a primary

sense; that is, it originates wealth from a first source. Land is this source and it is the chief if not the original source of all wealth, as the physiocrats once contended. Other means of wealth are mostly secondary; that is, they do something with what originally came from the land. The production of wealth among countrymen really begins by applying labor to the land. To breed and graze animals upon it is one of the first methods, but on the whole not a very important one. Clearing and bringing land under cultivation, together with all that goes into its improvement, is the great source of durable wealth. Along with this, of course, we must include the growing of plants and animals. The commonplace point of the whole thing is that agricultural wealth results from the manipulation of natural forces, whereas most other wealth results from art pure and simple. Certain consequences that flow from this fact give rise to a second peculiarity of wealth-getting by farming, namely:

2. It is more highly aleatory than is any other creative process. This is by virtue of its being more under the domination of natural forces than of human. As someone has said, "Nature is the ultimate management in the agricultural industry." Heat and cold, clouds and sunshine, rain and storm, drought and flood, plant and animal diseases are the final arbiters. Human labor and science have not yet attained sufficient mastery to give the farmer more than a gambler's chance. Take, for instance, the conflict waged against destructive insects—a phase in which the farmer is able to exercise more control than in any other; the battle often goes heavily against him, and at best he wins at a high cost. The economic entomologists tell us that despite all efforts at control, not less than 10 per cent of the total product is destroyed annually by insects.¹ When the farmer has done his best, Nature still has the whip hand and the results rest with luck. The accumulation of wealth by agriculture is therefore fluctuating and uncertain, and consequently hedged about with great limitations. The secondary means of production, such as manufacturing, transporting and merchandising, are not subject to nature's caprices. They are more stable and sure, and hence less limited in their possibilities.

¹ Thomas Brues, *Insects and Human Welfare*, pp. 39-40.

3. A third peculiarity of farming is its extraordinary number of productive units and managers. In 1935 there were 6,812,000 farms. This is a number in excess of all other wealth-producing enterprises, industrial, mining, commercial, and financial combined. The managerial portion of the people gainfully employed on these farms constitutes over half of the whole. Manufacturing, in contrast, has 7 per cent of its total numbers on the managerial staff.

The reason for so many enterprises in farming is found in the nature of the undertaking. It offers opportunity for a man of small capital to set up for himself, as is impossible in most other enterprises. Using manufacturing to show the contrast again, we find that the average investment in farms in 1919 was \$12,084, whereas that in manufacturing establishments amounted to \$153,000.²

Much significance attaches to this situation. It means that in agriculture better than one out of two and in manufacture less than one out of ten is his own boss. Moreover, the farm group enjoys a greater equality of wealth than does any other class. Great fortunes are unknown, but large numbers possess small properties.

So much for the advantages of farming; there are also inherent disadvantages. The very great number of enterprises under which farming is conducted tends to limit production, especially where the units are uneconomical, as is often the case. It of course depends as well upon the kind of farming, the soil, the climate, and the amount of improved land, as to what sized farm is most efficient.

There are three classes of farms; viz., large size, medium, and small. The first class requires one who does nothing but manage labor and direct the enterprise. Maybe the extensive use of machinery and hired help, together with the application of much capital to large units of land, is the only way profits can be made in commercial farming. Perhaps that explains why there was significant growth of big farms in the last census period, when those of 500 to 999 acres increased 6.6 per cent; those of 1,000 to 4,999 by 18.8 per cent; and those of over 5,000 by 25.9 per cent. Such farms included 39 per cent of the total acreage in 1930. Meantime, also, corporations engaged in agriculture increased from 8,000 to 9,618. Since

² U. S. *Census of Manufactures*, 1919, Abstract, p. 12.

1930 that number has probably been increased. Small scale farms often preclude the most efficient use of capital; hence in general commercial agriculture they may be driven to the wall. Nevertheless, they too have increased, those from 3 to 19 acres having kept pace with the growth of large farms. This can only mean in the main that people are turning to subsistence farming, often supplementary to industrial work.

The medium-sized farm, operated by the manager-worker, was long considered the most efficient for general agriculture. The best incomes were once derived from farms of 174 to 200 acres. The modal size of all farms in 1930 was 156.9 acres, with about half the land improved. If this closely approaches the most economic unit for general farming, it is obvious that a large per cent of the 6,288,648 farms in 1930 were too small, for 14.6 per cent of them were under 20 acres. By 1935 such farms had increased to 18.3 per cent of the total 6,812,000.³

In 1930 another 22.9 per cent ranged from 20 to 49 acres, and 21.8 per cent from 50 to 99 acres. That meant that a total of 59.5 per cent were too small to be profitable. However, the conclusion cannot be drawn that these all were unprofitable units, for in numerous instances they were quite sufficient for the purposes to which they were put. But it is not improbable, even when due allowance is made for all the qualifying factors, that the greater part of them were uneconomical. Probably one-third to one-half of the farms are or tend to be such units, and one-third of the farmers under normal conditions must supplement their farm incomes by wage labor to eke out a bare existence. Hence it would seem fair to say that wealth production is further handicapped by the inefficient units. Perhaps the day is at hand when only a very few will hold efficient units and the many will merely subsist on the soil.

4. A fourth peculiarity of agriculture is its lack of organization. The millions of units and managers are in competition among themselves. Practically all other industries by combination regulate their output. The lack of regulation has been one factor making agriculture unprofitable. Because of it overproduction commonly brings

³ *U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1935.*

glutted markets, and prices below actual cost of production. The surplus, which ought to yield gain, thus turns the situation into one bringing loss and bankruptcy to many. This has been illustrated with reference to wheat and cotton.

In 1921, when 814,905,000 bushels were produced at a cost of \$1.40 per bushel, the farmer got \$1.01. His loss was 39 cents per bushel. The next year the crop was 867,598,000 bushels and sold at 89 cents per bushel. The farmer lost 42 cents to the bushel. In 1923 the yield was 797,381,000 bushels and the farmer got 92.04 cents per bushel, sustaining a loss of 48 cents per bushel. In 1924, when there were 864,565,000 bushels, the farmer got \$1.28 and lost 12 cents per bushel.⁴

Until the government stepped in farmers were not organized to control their markets. They were mulcted of their profits by urban agencies. Too many of the tools of agricultural production on the distributive side are owned by non-farmers. What should have been the farmer's has thus flowed into the pockets of a non-farming class. How much difference there would be in the wealth and income of farmers, had organized selling and buying prevailed during the past three or four generations, no one can say. However, since 80 per cent of the income from agriculture depends upon the value of what is sold, it is probable that the selling process has been the greatest single factor in determining rural wealth. Now that upwards of a fourth of the total product disposed of is being sold thru coöperatives, and that nearly one-third of the farms are involved in them, voluntary organization gives some promise of recovering larger gains for farmers. However, organization did not rise soon enough nor become wide-spread and comprehensive enough to prevent disaster overtaking agriculture. Hence government has had to step in and direct crop control to prevent utter ruin.

5. Upon the management of any enterprise success or failure largely depends. Farming is no exception, but it has unique difficulties in this respect. They amount to limitations on wealth production rarely encountered by other industries. It is no exaggeration to say that the agricultural process is the most complex of enterprises.

⁴ W. B. Bizzell, *The Green Rising*, pp. 240-241.

The right combination of land, labor, and capital; the knowledge of plants and animals; the technique of their production; the problem of conserving soil fertility; the art of carrying on the undertaking day by day; and the business of buying and selling, all taken together require a higher order of intelligence and managerial ability for success than do most other enterprises. It is asking a good deal indeed of any man to carry so complex a process to highly successful issue. No wonder, therefore, that so few of the millions of managers of farms really succeed.

Apart from its complexity, there are certain other peculiar aspects of management in agriculture. Many farms are rented and are partly managed by someone other than the owner. It is a notorious fact that this arrangement has never resulted in good husbandry. Soil mining and inefficiency are not infrequently the consequences. Wealth does not accumulate. There is decay instead. Other businesses are not extensively operated by tenant managers.

Another handicap arises from the fact that home and business are combined. Ordinarily the home is put first and business second, whereas in other industries management is not so restricted. Whatever is commercially desirable is put into force. From an economic viewpoint, the farmer might also operate more advantageously were it not that his home must have foremost consideration. This is part of the penalty agriculture must pay for being a mode of living.

Again, the manager of this industry is dependent upon others for means of improvement. The ordinary farm unit is too small and its resources too limited to allow for research and experimentation. Many businesses carry on such work for themselves and reap the rewards. But new knowledge and methods involving the agricultural process must be worked out by special agencies. Naturally, farm progress was slow and farming remained relatively unchanged. Within the last century governments have undertaken the task of improvement. Much has been accomplished and the farmer greatly benefited.

In view of the conditions under which wealth is produced on farms, one would expect its rate of accumulation to be slower than

in other industries, and its total amount in proportion to the number of people involved to be smaller. This is in fact the case, as the following table, compiled from a study by the National Industrial Conference Board, shows.⁵

It is apparent that agricultural wealth has increased less rapidly at all periods than has the total national wealth. At times, as, for instance, from 1912 to 1920, the former actually decreased.

6. A sixth difficulty from which agriculture cannot escape rises from the nature of its product. What the farm produces goes chiefly to the satisfaction of primary needs, which are not subject to indefinite expansion; hence the producer of the goods that satisfy them is always confronted with strictly limited markets. For a

Table 28

AVERAGE ANNUAL PER CENT OF INCREASE OF TOTAL AND AGRICULTURAL WEALTH FROM 1880 TO 1925

	1880- 1890	1890- 1900	1900- 1904	1904- 1910	1910- 1912	1912- 1920	1920- 1922	1922- 1925
Total Wealth ..	6.9	4.1	2.3	..	6.6	..	2.4	...
Agricultural Wealth	5.0	3.2	..	6.2	0.67	- 0.3	- 6.0	0.84

given population can and will consume only about so much. If, therefore, a surplus is produced, it goes begging. Not so generally with other producers. They encounter no such strict limits to human wants; there can be almost indefinite expansion of the demand for products. Advertising creates wants, supplies the demand, and waxes rich on the gains. But agriculture can create little demand beyond satisfied needs. Hence it cannot expand indefinitely and reap profits at will.

These facts suggest the possibility that agriculture is rendered unprofitable thru overdevelopment. If it supplies more produce than the country can consume and the world demands, it is an overcrowded occupation. Altho the total per capita production of agricultural commodities is reported to be no greater today than it was

⁵ *The Agricultural Problem in the United States*, New York, 1926, pp. 54-55.

fifty years ago,⁶ there is evidence that the per capita consumption of such commodities is decreasing. For example, it is estimated that to feed the horses that have been eliminated in the State of Ohio since 1910 would require today 10 per cent of the crop area of the state.⁷ Since 1918 more than 32,000,000 acres of crop lands in the whole country have been released thru the decrease of horses and mules. Such elimination expands the demand for the products of industry and curtails the demand for those of agriculture. The balance between it and other industries has been upset, and, being overcrowded, it suffers. There are too many people at it; they are producing too much and getting too little for their efforts. In fact, as it is, about 50 per cent of the farmers of America supply 90 per cent of the marketed product. The other 50 per cent are mainly subsistence farmers who sell little and have little cash income. Thruout the greater part of our history most farmers have had relatively low incomes. The logic of the argument would then lead us to conclude that the occupation has always been overcrowded. This, however, is doubtful. At least there are, as we have shown, other factors that are just as important.

The Wealth Inventoried

How much have farmers as a class accumulated? Only estimates on the basis of limited data from various sources are possible. Dr. L. C. Gray made careful estimate for the beginning of 1920, when the book value of farm wealth was probably the greatest in our history.

These facts must be supplemented by others to get a true picture. One item is other property owned by farmers. This includes stocks, bonds, town real estate, and cash on deposit. This, for the date calculated, was put at \$9,033,737,258.⁸ Another item is farmers' debts, amounting at that date to \$11,029,098,020. The data are assembled in Table 29.

⁶ H. R. Tolley, U. S. Dept. Agriculture. Address before Association of Land Grant Colleges, Washington, Nov., 1926. Mimeographed circular.

⁷ J. L. Falconer, "Our Agricultural Income," *Rural America*, Oct., 1927, p. 12.

⁸ L. C. Gray, "Accumulation of Wealth by Farmers," *American Economic Review*, Vol. XIII, March, 1923, p. 163.

In addition, the accumulations of farm laborers resident in the country brought the grand total for the farming class to \$62,522,729,703, or \$1,978 per capita, on the 1920 population basis.⁹

Since 1920 all estimates show a marked decrease of agricultural wealth. In 1937 land values were only about 85 per cent as high as before the World War and only 16 per cent above the bottom depression price of 1933.¹⁰ The total wealth of agriculture for 1930 was put at \$57,245,544,000; and for 1932 at \$44,339,000,000.¹¹

Table 29

NET WORTH OF FARMER ^a

Assets	Total	Per Farm Family ^b
Farm capital owned by farmers	\$63,818,090,465 ^c	\$ 9,897
Other assets	9,033,737,258	1,401
Total assets	\$72,851,827,723	\$11,298
LIABILITIES		
Secured by farm real estate mortgage	5,967,384,775	925
Short-term indebtedness to banks . . .	3,455,813,034	536
Other indebtedness	1,605,900,211	249
Total liabilities	\$11,029,098,020	\$ 1,710
Net Worth	\$61,822,729,703	\$ 9,587

^a Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

^b Assuming number of farm families identical with the number of farms.

^c \$800,000,000 of cash to run the farm deducted in order to avoid counting it twice.

A better appreciation of this wealth may be secured by comparing the per capita amount with that of the non-agricultural population. W. R. Ingalls put the total national wealth at \$290,909,285,628 in 1920 and at \$460,000,000,000 in 1929. This gave nearly \$2,739 per capita at the first date and \$3,700 in 1929. The wealth of the non-agricultural classes was, in 1920, \$3,060 per capita and about \$4,340 in 1929. Dr. W. I. King had a little higher figure for the

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

¹⁰ A. G. Black, "Toward Farm Security," U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 308*, p. 20.

¹¹ *Agricultural Yearbook*, 1933.

first date, giving to the population outside of agriculture \$3,175 per capita. On the basis of these data, the per capita wealth for the farming class was estimated to be about 50 per cent less than for the non-farming class.¹² By 1929 it was slightly more than half the average of all classes.

The way in which the wealth is distributed is a far more vital matter. Averages per farmer and per capita for the various classes according to tenure will convey some idea of it. Table 30 is compiled from the sources already cited.

If these figures be approximately correct, it is apparent that about 62 per cent of the farming class owns 85 per cent of the

Table 30
DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH AMONG FARMERS^a

Tenure	Per Cent of Farm Pop- ulation ^b	Per Cent of All Farmers	Net Wealth Per Farmer	Net Wealth Per Capita	Per Cent of Total
Full Owners .	44.0	53.3	\$13,476	\$3,230	74.10
Part Owners ^c	08.5	8.6	12,829	3,075	11.45
Tenants	26.0	29.1	4,315	1,034	13.00
Croppers	08.5	09.0	354	85	00.34
Laborers	13.0	00.0	350		01.11

^a Gray, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-171.

^b Those hiring land as well as cultivating their own.

^c Roughly estimated.

wealth, while the remaining 38 per cent possesses the other 15 per cent. Unequal as this is, it is vastly better distribution than that which obtains with respect to the national wealth in general. For in the latter case estimates assign close to two-thirds of the total to the richest 2 per cent of the people. This leaves the great majority provided "with the scraps of wealth cast aside from the table of Dives."¹³ The fact nearly two-thirds of the farming class own modest estates is significant.

Dire poverty was, of course, no more absent from the country

¹² Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

¹³ W. I. King, *The Wealth and Income of the People of the United States*, pp. 96-98.

than from the city even in the best of times. It was, however, until within a decade or so, largely confined to the landless tenants, croppers and laborers. Since then the general trend has been definitely toward more rural poverty. Certain facts, such as the rapid increase of the number of tenants and croppers, the high rate of bankruptcies and forced sales among landowners, and, finally the enormous relief rolls of the thirties, indicated a growing impoverishment. In the case of the growth of tenantry the movement has long been a steady one, but the rate of bankruptcies has been fluctuating. However, this rate rose from 1910 to 1920, then shot up. The figures jumped from 21.1 per 100,000 farmers in 1920 to 50.3 in 1921, 92.6 in 1923, and reached 123.3 in 1925.¹⁴ The rate of bankruptcies in the commercial world is normally much higher than among farmers, but by 1922 the farm rate was running ahead. This reflected the calamitous conditions that befell agriculture following the World War. There was deflation of speculative land values and readjustment, involving economic tragedy for many. The farming class reached the cross-roads by 1920 and increasing numbers were doomed thenceforth to follow the road of distress and misery until government aided them.

Income in Agriculture

Current income is a better index of the material welfare of the farmers than is accumulated wealth. By current income is meant not merely total income, which includes gains and losses in the value of property owned, but net cash receipts plus the value of income received in the form of commodities. In the farmers' case it includes wages, profits from business, rental value of homes occupied by owners, value of commodities which families produce for their own consumption, interest on capital investment in farms or other property, and rents.

Here again only crude estimates are available. These are based on general averages derived from limited data. A large margin of error is necessarily involved but not enough to vitiate their use as

¹⁴ National Industrial Conference Board, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

general approximations. The National Industrial Conference Board published estimates of farmers' income for 1919 to 1925. Table 31 is based on these data.¹⁵

The estimates having reference to the "crop year" make deductions for interest and rent paid non-farmers. The annual estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics placed the gross farm income for 1929 at \$10,479,000,000. By 1932 it had dropped to \$5,143,000,000. Following that it increased, reaching in 1933 \$6,360,000,000, inclusive of \$300,000,000 in government subsidies. In 1937 it reached \$10,400,000,000, including \$367,000,000 from the government, and in 1938 it was \$9,200,000,000, including \$482,000,000 in government payments. Table 31 gives a detailed analysis of the income of farm operators for the year 1935-1936. While the farmers' gross income, pieced out by government aid, has returned to about that of 1929, it is low compared with more prosperous days. When subsidies, amounting to 10 or 15 per cent of the total, are excluded, it is, in fact, about what it was a quarter of a century ago. Moreover, farm income today represents a relatively smaller proportion of the national income than it did nearly two decades ago, for in 1919-1921 it was 14.3 per cent, whereas in 1935-1938 it was about 9 per cent.

Table 31

FARMERS' INCOME FROM INVESTMENT AND LABOR, 1919-1925 *

Crop Year	1 Gross In- come In- cluding Food, Fuel and Rent (Mil- lions)	2 Total Return for Invest- ment ^a (Mil- lions)	3 Return for All Operators' Labor (Mil- lions)	4 Re- turn per Farm- er for Labor	5 Average Return on Invest- ment per Farm ^b	6 Total Income per Farm Family	7 Wages of Hired Labor, without Board	8 Annual Earn- ings of Workers in Other Occu- pations
1919-20 ..	\$16,621	\$6,061	\$6,997	\$1,086	\$930	\$2,018	\$675	\$1,394
1920-21 ..	13,750	1,614	3,735	581	251	832	779	1,437
1921-22 ..	10,313	2,008	2,646	421	313	734	520	1,356
1922-23 ..	11,449	3,221	3,792	593	403	996	501	1,374
1923-24 ..	12,453	3,157	4,310	675	496	1,171	563	1,411
1924-25 ..	13,324	3,900	5,120	804	612	1,416	569	1,415

* This is return on all property including operators and non-operators.

^b These figures are arrived at by dividing column 2 by the number of farms, but they are not wholly comparable with those in column 4, with which they are added to get column 6. The latter column, therefore, is only a rough estimate.

¹⁵ See *op. cit.*, p. 56.

There are two or three very significant things about the general income of farmers. In the first place, a low average of total income per family is evident. In the second place, even in the most prosperous years, when a 5 or 6.5 per cent return on the capital is allowed, the amount allocated to labor income is small indeed. From 1909-1917 the earnings were way below those for other workers, averaging \$200 less. From 1917 to 1919 came the best years the farmers have ever enjoyed. Then the labor returns rose somewhat above the average for other workers. This, however, was not to last. Since then the general trend has been downward to relatively lower levels than ever before. Preceding the industrial depression, the average was estimated to be less than 44 per cent of the annual earnings of other workers. In terms of the 1914 dollar, the real labor income fell below that of pre-war days, while the real wages of other workers were believed to be more than a fifth higher.¹⁶

Table 32

DISTRIBUTION OF NON-RELIEF FARM FAMILIES BY INCOME LEVELS,
1935-36^a

Income Level	Number of Families	Percentage of Total Families	Cumulative Percentage of Families in Each Group
Under \$250	232,040	3.8	3.8
\$250-\$500	858,963	13.9	17.7
\$500-\$750	1,108,400	18.0	35.7
\$750-\$1,000	1,027,044	16.6	52.3
\$1,000-\$1,250	793,250	12.8	65.1
\$1,250-\$1,500	601,571	9.8	74.9
\$1,500-\$1,750	433,590	7.0	81.9
\$1,750-\$2,000	297,221	4.8	86.7
\$2,000-\$2,250	188,336	3.1	89.8
\$2,250-\$2,500	152,309	2.5	92.3
\$2,500 and over	473,834	7.7	100.0
All levels	6,166,558	100	100

^a Source: James G. Maddox, "Suggestions for a National Program of Rural Rehabilitation and Relief," *Journal of Farm Economics*, Nov., 1939, p. 888.

Arranged from data in: Consumer Incomes in United States, Their Distribution in 1935-36, published by the National Resources Committee, Washington, 1938.

¹⁶ National Industrial Conference Board, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59. As to this point there is much doubt. Labor economists generally do not agree that the real wages of "other workers" were higher than in 1914.

With the coming of the depression, the farmer's wages, calculated as earnings over and above return on his capital, were virtually wiped out. If anything, his relative position compared with other employed classes was worsened. In the third place, if we turn the procedure about, and allow farm operators a labor income at hired labor rates, the interest returns on capital invested are lower than in other industries. In the five years preceding the World War they averaged 5.8 per cent, and for 1920 to 1925, 4.6 per cent for all farm property. If, however, the returns paid by farmers for outside capital had been eliminated from the total returns on farm capital, and operators alone considered, farm investments yielded from nothing to less than 4 per cent. In 1920-1921 they were negative. Then the average rose for a time to 1.7 per cent, including food, rent, and fuel, as is done in all the estimates of return on capital.¹⁷ But this did not last, as all return on capital was wiped out after 1929.

Altho a large per cent of the farmers are capitalists as well as laborers, their average incomes from all sources have rarely been much above that of hired laborers in other industries. Before the war incomes were perhaps equal to those of the best-paid class of skilled labor, but from 1920 to 1930 they averaged fully \$200 less than the annual earnings of wage earners outside of agriculture.

A comparison of the per capita income of the farm population with that of other classes shows, if anything, worse results. In 1918, one of the best years, the estimated average for the farmer was \$359, as compared with \$677 for other classes.¹⁸ It is estimated from data for 1925 that the farm population got about \$300 current income per capita, which was probably about half of the average for all classes. The National Bureau of Economic Research estimated that for the year 1926 the per capita income of the American people was \$770. There are no figures to show just what the farm population received, but it is not likely that the average was much more than half this amount.

Another way of viewing the farmer's status is to compare his relative per capita share of the national income with that received

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

¹⁸ Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

by those in other occupations. The National Industrial Conference Board did this for the period 1850 to 1920. Table 33 is based on its figures.¹⁹

These figures were arrived at by calculating how much each person gainfully employed in agriculture received in proportion to each hundred dollars received per person gainfully employed in all other occupations. It should be noted that agriculture, by virtue of the unusual number of children in farm families, never shows as large a portion of its population gainfully occupied as do other industries. In 1920, for example, but 34.6 per cent of the farm population was reported as gainfully occupied, in contrast to 41.4 per cent in the non-farming groups. This fact tends to make the share falling to farmers appear larger than it really is. It should be noted further that these figures do not represent income but only the relative position of income receivers.

* It is obvious from a glance at the table that the agricultural group was the tail-end sharer in the national dividend thruout the whole period. Its relative position was a fluctuating one, but on the whole

Table 33

RELATIVE PER CAPITA SHARE OF THE NATIONAL INCOME FALLING TO EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP. (THE SHARE OF EACH PERSON ENGAGED IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS EQUALS 100)

Year	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1909	1910	1911	1920
Agriculture relative to all others	31	38	40	31	36	46	56	66	41	39
Manufacturing relative to all others	135	125	125	127	157	137	96	94	107	85
Mining relative to all others ..	104	113	165	209	166	173	96	93	121	142
Transportation relative to all others	998	920	375	411	217	176	132	128	142	135
Miscellaneous relative to all others	158	112	148	153	128	120	141	132	174	191

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

there was improvement up to about 1900. Following that the farmers' share generally declined.²⁰ By virtue of soil exhaustion, rise in labor and capital cost, together with other more complex factors, 1900 seems to mark a turning point for generally poorer returns.²¹ For instance, in 1920 about 39 per cent of the farms received income under \$1,000, whereas in 1930 the figure was 49 per cent. Similarly, at a former date 56 per cent received under \$1,500, while ten years later over 64 per cent were in this class.

Distribution of Income

The relation of farmers' income to that of other classes having been noted, the question next in order is that of distribution of income among the agriculturists. So far we have dealt with only very general averages. These have their value, but at best they present only a generalized situation. The income actually received by various classes of farmers may be seen in Tables 32 and 34, which show the range of income for the years 1919-1920 and 1935-1936. About 70 per cent of the farm families were found in groups receiving \$1,700 or less in the year 1919. The next year 70 per cent were in the groups averaging \$933 or less. About 40 per cent av-

Table 34

RANGE OF INCOMES RECEIVED BY FARMERS, 1919, 1920 ^a

Income Range	Per Cent of Farmers	Per Cent of Income	No of Farmers Jan 1, 1920 (Thousands)	Amount Income Received in 1919 (Millions)	Average Income, 1919	Amount of Income Received 1920 (Millions)	Average Income, 1920
					Current Dollars		Current Dollars
Negative Income	4.55	...	293	Loss	Loss	Loss	Loss
0- 500	12.53	2.3	808	\$ 263.2	\$ 326	\$ 143.0	\$ 177
500- 1,000	21.89	9.0	1,412	1,029.9	729	559.7	396
1,000- 1,500	17.01	11.2	1,097	1,281.6	1,168	696.5	635
1,500- 2,000	14.69	14.2	947	1,624.9	1,716	883.1	933
2,000- 3,000	13.31	17.7	858	2,025.4	2,361	1,100.8	1,283
3,000- 4,000	7.66	14.4	494	1,647.8	3,336	895.5	1,813
4,000- 5,000	3.25	8.0	210	915.4	4,359	497.5	2,369
5,000- 7,500	3.17	10.3	24	1,178.6	5,777	640.6	3,150
7,500-10,000	0.93	4.4	60	503.4	8,390	273.6	4,560
10,000-and over	1.01	8.5	65	972.7	14,965	528.6	8,132

^a L. C. Gray, U.S.D.A. "Accumulation of Wealth by Farmers," *American Economic Review*, Vol. XIII, Supplement, March, 1923, p. 177.

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

eraged \$729 or less in 1919 and \$396 or less in 1920. One-sixth averaged \$326 or less in the former year and \$177 or less in the latter.²² In 1935-1936 about the same percentage of the families as in 1920 received less than \$750.

The three main classes engaged in agriculture, owner-operators, tenants, and laborers, representing approximately 52.5, 24.5, and 13 per cent, respectively, of the total number in 1920, shared the labor income from farming very unequally. Here again we must depend upon broad averages. The estimates of labor income for the years 1919-1925 appear in Table 35.

According to these averages, the tenant farmer's labor income for a period following 1920 was better than the owner-operator's; and the latter was not so well paid for his labor as were hired workers. The outstanding fact is that the land owner under favorable conditions found it exceedingly difficult to make a commercial rate of interest on the value of his land and a labor wage at the same time. The share or cash tenants apparently did better, for they had a less difficult problem, since they needed to make interest on a smaller investment involving no land. It is not that they did better than the city toiler, but only not so badly as the land owner. When the value of food, fuel, and house rent, furnished in part by the

Table 35

AVERAGE INCOMES OF FARM OWNERS, TENANTS AND LABORERS,
1919-1925 ^a

Crop Year	Owner- Operator's Labor	Tenant-Operator's Labor Income	Wages of Hired Labor Without Board
1919-1920	\$793	\$1,326	\$675
1920-1921	298	899	779
1921-1922	178	793	520
1922-1923	345	945	501
1923-1924	442	1,016	563
1924-1925	573	1,122	569

^a These data are taken from tables published by the National Industrial Conference Board, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

²² *Ibid.*

farm and equalling \$634 in 1924-1925,²³ was deducted from these figures, there was not often anything at all left. It thus seems justifiable to say that if the farm did not furnish home, fuel and food, the farmer generally would find it economically impossible to remain in agriculture.²⁴

It is further obvious that in the best years agriculture has given but small chance for accumulating wealth, and that to only a few. Ordinarily savings must be pinched out of the meager "fruits of the hand." Compared with other occupations, the advantage, if there is any, lies not in the possibilities of good income or fortune. As owner or better class of tenant, the farmer may be no better off economically than the wage earner in other industries but he is not a wage slave. He has some compensation in being his own master and running his own business. Nevertheless, wealth is one element of social power, and rural society will fall short in comparison with urban society just so long as it suffers economically.

The Problem of Income

We have pointed out the handicaps under which the soil tiller labors in producing wealth. We have seen how meager the resulting income is. But what of the outlook? For more than half a century, with only brief intervals of quiescence, the farmers of America have been agitated over the problem of income. Again and again agrarian movements have focused upon this issue, but without lasting results. Unsolved it remains while conditions have grown worse. Progress there has been in the agricultural process. Varieties of plants and animals have been constantly improved. More efficient methods of husbandry have been adopted. Machinery has been introduced until the farmer of today is perhaps nine or ten times more productive than the farmer of a few generations ago. Between 1870 and 1930 the physical production per agricultural worker is said to have increased by two and a half times.²⁵ He ought to profit

²³ Report of Secretary of Agriculture, 1925, p. 34.

²⁴ National Industrial Conference Board, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

²⁵ O. E. Baker, "The Outlook for Rural Youth," U.S.D.A. *Extension Circular* No. 223, 1935, p. 2.

from all this in larger income. He should receive many times what the hoe and sickle farmer did, but as a matter of fact, his relative share of income is less than what it was sixty years ago. His efforts to progress have been like those of Alice in "Alice in Wonderland," merely running harder to keep in the same place and then not succeeding. Must this continue to be his fate?

To attempt to answer this question would lead into much speculation and end in conjecture. Suffice it therefore merely to outline the conditions looking toward possible improvement. Better farming is desirable, but that produces a surplus forcing prices to unprofitable levels. How to control the surplus and stabilize the market then becomes the problem. Various political schemes involving some subsidy to agriculture have been made into law, with a view to equalizing farm and urban conditions. They are justified on the ground that urban interests have long taken a subsidy from the pockets of the taxpayer and consumer in the form of a protective tariff. Whatever may be the long-run consequences of such legislation, a panacea is scarcely to be found. Better business organization among farmers to control the marketing process is needed. The coöperative movement promises much in this direction. If it can be made universal and thoroughgoing, it may eventually regulate, within limits, production and thus the prices of farm products. The reorganization of farms on a more efficient basis, and the application of more intelligence to the use of land and management also are necessary. These are some of the things that must be done if fair returns are to come from agriculture. But when the best possible has been done, American agriculture will probably still fall short of being a fortune hunter's paradise.

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Topics for Discussion

1. What bearing has the generally more equitable distribution of wealth in the country than in the city on the social life prevalent in each area?
2. In what direction is the distribution of wealth in the country trending? State the evidence for your conclusion.
3. Explain the meaning of "parity prices" as used in the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 and how it is proposed to attain them.
4. Wherein does the "parity" concept for farmers differ from the "fair wage" idea for labor embodied in the Wagner Labor Act?
5. Will a scarcity economy for farmers give prosperity to other classes or will it operate to their harm as a scarcity economy of manufacturers has worked to the farmers' injury?
6. Is it possible for the farmers of your community to secure adequate incomes while maintaining the fertility of the soil? How?
7. Suggest how the farmers can generally be brought to apply what knowledge is available thru the U.S.D.A., the experiment stations, etc., to the problem of soil conservation.
8. How successful is the government's effort to improve farm income? How do farmers respond to it in your community?

THE FARMER'S STANDARD OF LIVING

THE problem of income among farmers having been analyzed, the next question is, how do they use it? Naturally, the first draft on the earnings of any class is the expense of living. How much of the income will be required for mere subsistence is naturally governed by the size of the family. It is customary, however, in discussions of income expenditure to regard the family as a household of five persons consisting of a father and mother and three children ranging from two to fourteen years of age, the whole equalling about 3.35 adults as regards consumption requirements. If the family is large, it will obviously need more of the income than if it is small. So the question of the relative size of the farmer's family must be considered in relation to the utilization of income.

If anything remains after the necessities of living are provided, it may be expended in bringing more children into the world and in maintaining them, so that the family is kept at the bare subsistence level with no margin for other purposes. In case there is a residue not thus consumed, it may go into savings. In the country this will probably mean the acquisition of more land, its improvement, and the increase of capital employed in the productive process. If the surplus does not go into savings, or only a part, it will normally be spent on comforts and luxuries, that is, on things that provide not only for physical subsistence but for a more abundant living.

The utilization of income is the best index of a group's intelligence, education, value judgments, ideals, social status—in short, of the standard of living.

It may be unnecessary to say that life is pretty thoroly deter-

mined by economic conditions, and may be fairly measured by them. One does not normally find people living high on low income, or low on high income. There must be a surplus to make high living possible. To be sure, it doesn't always follow that where size of income is sufficient, people will live high. They may prefer indeed to breed, adding to their numbers till no margin above animal subsistence remains. Or they may prefer to save and increase their acquisitions, instead of improving their mode of living. Altho surplus income makes possible these alternatives, as a rule in American society they are not often chosen. Surplus income, therefore, not only determines the possible standard of life, but largely dictates the probable standard. In other words, the larger the income, the higher people will live. For the law of living is not merely to subsist, but to subsist as abundantly as possible. It is not the necessities that people care for, but the comforts and luxuries. When the price will allow, they will sacrifice the rearing of progeny and the hoarding of savings for the privilege of consumption. As income mounts, the more the rank and file seem to forego other things for the joy of high living. The birth rate, as is well known, declines regularly as people ascend the economic scale. And, I suspect, the desire to hoard does likewise, at least within broad limits. So, I repeat, the law is, the more ample the means, the more likely the expenditure for comforts and luxuries.

How far the farmer utilizes his income in the normal way remains to be discovered from the available data on the subject.

Definition of Standard of Living

The term, "standard of living," has to do with consumption rather than acquisition. Rightly used, it means not what it costs to live, nor how people ought to live, unless perchance we are talking about an ideal scale of living. It means in reality the way in which a group or class of people habitually live or wish to live. It involves the total range of satisfactions enjoyed or desired.

Kirkpatrick has submitted a more formal definition. He says: "It may be regarded as a measure of life in terms of the sum total of

values enjoyed by the family, as evidenced thru the acquisition and expenditure of income, and thru the use of time in the satisfaction of wants for things both material (as food, clothing and shelter) and spiritual (as education, music and art)."¹ He calls this the "standard of life," and thinks that it means more than the more common term, the "standard of living," which is usually defined with reference to the consumption of material goods. He wishes to stress the necessity of including expenditures for health, transportation, education, recreation and social relationships, along with those for food, housing, fuel and clothing. In this he is quite right, but it is not necessary to designate the proper concept by the term he employs, for the more common term has been given much breadth of meaning by others and can be given sufficient content for all purposes.

In fact, the term is used with various qualifying adjectives to designate the higher levels of living, some of which include all that anyone can desire. The term, "a subsistence standard of living," is commonly used to indicate a scale of living that embraces only the physical or animal needs of existence. The term, "a comfort standard of living," is used to describe a scale of expenditure that allows in some measure for the needs of men as social creatures as well as for their mere animal requirements. It allows for decent housing and clothing, insurance, the conservation of health, a little recreation and amusement, and a modest taste of life's comforts and cultural privileges. The term, "efficiency standard of life or living," is only a different name for a comfort or health standard. Still another term, "a standard of luxury," signifies a level of living in which all sorts of wants are indulged. It implies the idea of leisure and pleasure, conspicuous display, vicarious consumption, elegance, travel, the gratification of whimsical notions, and the disposition to follow the dictates of fashion. Then we have the phrase, "a normal standard of living," or one which connotes a well-balanced and moderate enjoyment of goods and services, work and

¹ E. L. Kirkpatrick, "The Standard of Living in a Typical Section of Diversified Farming," Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 423*, p. 5.

leisure, social contacts and opportunities, and whatever else conduces to a healthy, wholesome development, physical, mental, moral and social.

The standard of living is clearly an excellent measure of social adequacy. By means of it we can compare farmers among themselves and with other classes. We can discover whether the same income is associated with as high a standard in the country as in the city, or with a higher or lower one; and if differences appear, what the causes may be.

In the studies made of the way urban classes live, wide variations are found. There are many scales, ranging from mere subsistence thru all degrees of comfort up to the greatest luxury. In general, however, there are broad groups within which about the same standard of living prevails. Likewise in the studies made of farm families, there seem to be several levels. There are not so many gradations, however, as in the cities; nor are they so far apart. Farm laborers, farm tenants of several types, and owner-operators are groups varying in their scale of expenditure. It is, therefore, obviously quite impossible to formulate an idea of a universal standard of living either for urban or rural people and to compare the two. Comparisons must be made for particular classes or groups. Like must be compared with like, if such exist and can be located. Nor do the differences end with the variations so far mentioned. City classes are not all alike, and the same classes in any two cities are not altogether comparable in their standards of living. Much less so is it with the farm classes living in the various sections of rural America. A farm tenant family in Georgia, for instance, and one in Iowa are likely to be a good deal farther apart in their standards of living than a street-car conductor in Cleveland is from one in St. Louis. The fact of variations suggests inquiry as to causes of the differences.

Sundry Factors Determining Standards of Living

It has been made sufficiently clear that the amount of income is the primary factor. Differences in what people have to spend

largely account for differences in standards. Yet there are those who contend that it is putting the cart before the horse when income is made the cause, and standard of living the effect. They say that standards are first and furnish the dynamic for seeking income with which to gratify them. True it is that we are reared in a social environment where standards are a part of our heritage. Some may have them without the wherewithal to realize them; but ordinarily a family's economic status is the big factor in determining how much of the social heritage its members will fall heir to. Hence, tho income and standards reciprocally influence each other, there can be little question about which is primary.

Certain other factors, however, tend to modify the influence of income. In recognizing these, we obviously give emphasis to specific factors in the social heritage.

1. *One is social class.* To be sure, income may be chiefly responsible for the existence of classes; but wholly apart from material possessions, there are class norms and values dictated by tradition. The individual takes his cue from his associates, and all tend more or less to conform to common ideals. Altho classes are not closed groups in America, and individuals can readily pass from one to another with changing fortune, the average person adheres pretty much to the habits of his associates.

2. *A second factor* is the progress of civilization. Society is not static, least of all our own. The creation of new commodities and new interests gives rise to new wants. What is accounted good to-day will be revaluated tomorrow. First in one direction and then in another moves the development, bidding us cast the old aside or be left stranded. Thus for the social order there is no abiding set of values, but a progressive revaluation.

3. *A third factor* is the individual's temperament. Individuals and families will have criteria of their own, due to biologic heritage, differences in education, age, etc. The influence of education, in particular, is very great. The Federal investigations in this field have found that where the farmer and his wife have received more than twelve grades of schooling, a much higher standard of living prevails than among those with less. It averaged more than \$550

higher than for those with eight or less grades and \$277 higher than those with nine to twelve grades. More important still was the difference in the way the expenditure was distributed. The more highly educated families devoted proportionally much more of their income to advancement. This averaged 10.4 per cent in the highest class, compared with 7.0 in the next below and 5.8 in the lowest.² All these conditions affect the expenditure of income.

4. *A fourth factor*, already mentioned, is size of family and age of its members. For instance, the studies of farmers' expenditures on living show an increase of total cost of about \$140 for each additional child. As the numbers mount up, a larger proportion of the cost must be spent on food and clothing, and less is used for cultural purposes. This means that to increase the size of the family is to lower the standard of living, if the amount of non-material goods is the criterion of high or low standard. With advancing age of children somewhat less goes for material and more for spiritual things; hence a higher standard tends to result.³

So much for certain general factors. What of particular ones influencing the farmers' standard of living? There are some, and they trace to practically the same forces that determine the peculiar mental attitudes of country people. More specifically: (a) one factor is geographic conditions. Not only do these help to differentiate the standard among farmers in the several sections of the country and among those within the same section, but they help also to differentiate rural from urban standards. The city dweller is influenced primarily by configuration to a social environment, but countrymen by adaptation to a physical environment. The conditions of life of the one are not those of the other, and each in consequence has its own standards. (b) Isolation, both physical and social, is another rural factor. It conduces to indifference toward many things that otherwise would be important. There is no social ladder to climb, no social position to gain or hold, no reputation to make or advance by conspicuous consumption. On the contrary, the

² E. L. Kirkpatrick, "The Farmer's Standard of Living," U. S. Dept. of Agr. *Bulletin No. 1466*, pp. 44-45.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-41.

farmer is more likely to enhance his standing by conspicuous production. His isolation, coupled with the nature of his occupation, largely eliminates the interest in expensive clothes. Anything desirable and comfortable rather than costly and stylish will do, for the most part. At the same time, isolation from the centers where all sorts of goods are displayed in ways to create wants protects the farmer against rapid change of standards. He is thus more conservative than the city dweller.

The effects of isolation are seen in some sections where a crude and simple way of living ill befits the income. This is notably true of immigrant groups and even of certain religious sectarians long resident in the country. (c) The inertia of the past has a hand in molding rural standards. Certain values and habits of a pioneer civilization still hold good. This is perhaps outstanding as regards health and housing practices. Again, the ideals of bygone days may be followed where conditions have so changed as to make them difficult. For instance, the rather extravagant and luxurious ways of living followed by the slaveholding planters of the Cotton Kingdom still tend to persist in parts of the South.

Other factors could be mentioned as modifying the expenditure of the farmer's income. Ignoring them for the present, we may call attention to forces working for uniformity of standards. These, of course, influence the urban as well as the rural population. Perhaps we should say it is the urban standards that are being broadcast, instead of the rise of common standards; for of a truth it is the urbanizing process we have in mind. Practically all of the agencies seeking the improvement of country life set up urban standards as their norm. This is true of educational efforts made by the schools, colleges, universities, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Public Health Service, women's clubs, Boys' and Girls' Club Work, the coöperative organizations, churches and other less important forces. The extension work of the home and farm demonstrators generally proceeds upon the assumption that city culture should be transplanted to the country. Of increasing importance is the impress of the city newspaper, urban literature, and the radio upon the ways of the countryman.

The city is literally overrunning wide areas of the countryside in the automobile. At the same time the country people are swarming into the cities for business and pleasure, or to find work and permanent residence. Inevitably contacts between urban and rural families are being multiplied. The consequence is a growing imitation of town and city customs by farmers, and a marked tendency toward a common standard of living.

Standard of Living and Farm Expenditure

The best objective measure of the standard of living is the cost of living and its distribution among the various classes of goods, utilities, services and satisfactions for which it is expended. This measure has its faults. Kirkpatrick calls attention to two or three that apply especially to the farm situation.⁴ One is the chance for great discrepancies between market or estimated value of goods furnished by the farm and their actual value. Another is the difficulty of measuring food values by their cost, the adequacy of clothing by the money spent on it, the comforts of a home by its rental price, or the satisfactions gained by expenditures for travel, recreation, education and the like. A third difficulty comes from the fact that the cost of living, even tho inclusive of many intangible things, such as books, musical instruments, and pictures, gives no hint whether there is any leisure time for the use of these goods or not. And if there is not, they do not indicate a very high standard. A fourth limitation in using the cost of living measure, is its complete failure to reveal whether the expenditures have been economical or wasteful. Bearing in mind these shortcomings of the method, the cost of living remains the best measure we have.

Eight or ten groups of goods and services enter into the cost of living. These are food, clothing, rent, operating goods—as fuel and light—furnishings, maintenance of health, insurance, culture and advancement, personal goods and unclassified items. In the studies of the cost of living on farms made by the Department of Agriculture, one of the problems has been to fix the value of goods

⁴ E. L. Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

furnished by the farm. These are important items, including most of the food, the rent, and a considerable portion of the fuel.

Just what is meant by each of the groups as related to the cost of living on farms should be made clear. Food includes that furnished by the farm together with what is purchased. Clothing includes all wearing apparel purchased during the year. Rent of the farmhouse for one year is reckoned at 10 per cent of its value. Furnishings include all household equipment purchased during the year. Operating goods include fuel furnished by the farm and purchased, cleansing materials, matches bought, help hired in the house, laundry sent out, telephone charges, automobile upkeep and annual depreciation at 15 per cent of cost, in proportion to its

Table 36

DISTRIBUTION OF AVERAGE VALUE OF GOODS USED AMONG THE DIFFERENT GROUPS OF GOODS CONSUMED PER FAMILY DURING ONE YEAR;
2,886 FARM FAMILIES OF SELECTED LOCALITIES IN 11 STATES IN
COMPARISON WITH FARM FAMILIES OF OTHER LOCALITIES FOR WHICH DATA ARE AVAILABLE *

Goods Used	2,886 Farm Families of Selected Localities in 11 States, 1922-1924				861 Farm Families of Selected Localities of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas, 1919 ¹	402 Farm Families of Livingston County, New York, for Year Ended Aug. 31, 1921 ² , ³
	All Families All States	317 Families New England States	1,130 Families Southern States	1,439 Families North Central States		
Total value	\$1,597.50	\$1,692.20	\$1,551.00	\$1,613.20	\$1,436.00	\$2,012.00
	Per Cent of Total					
Food including groceries ..	41.2	41.8	44.6	38.6	44.0	39.5
Clothing	14.7	13.1	15.6	14.4	17.7	13.7
Rent	12.5	12.0	10.1	14.4	9.7	11.6
Furniture and furnishings	2.5	2.1	2.3	2.7	2.0	2.1
Operation goods (fuel) ...	{ 13.3 (5.3)	{ 15.1 (8.2)	{ 12.5 (4.3)	{ 13.6 (5.5)	{ 12.0 (3.7)	{ 15.8 (7.4)
Maintenance of health ...	3.8	3.6	3.1	4.5	4.7	4.1
Advancement goods	6.6	7.0	6.7	6.4	5.9	6.2
Personal goods	2.6	3.0	2.4	2.6	1.2 ⁴	2.4
Insurance, life and health	2.6	2.1	2.5	2.7	2.6	4.0 ⁵
Unclassified .....	.2	.2	.2	.1	.2	.6

¹ "Relation Between the Ability to Pay and the Standard of Living Among Farmers." *Dept. Agr. Bul. 1382, 1926.*

² "Family Living in Farm Homes." *Dept. Agr. Bul. 1214, 1924.*

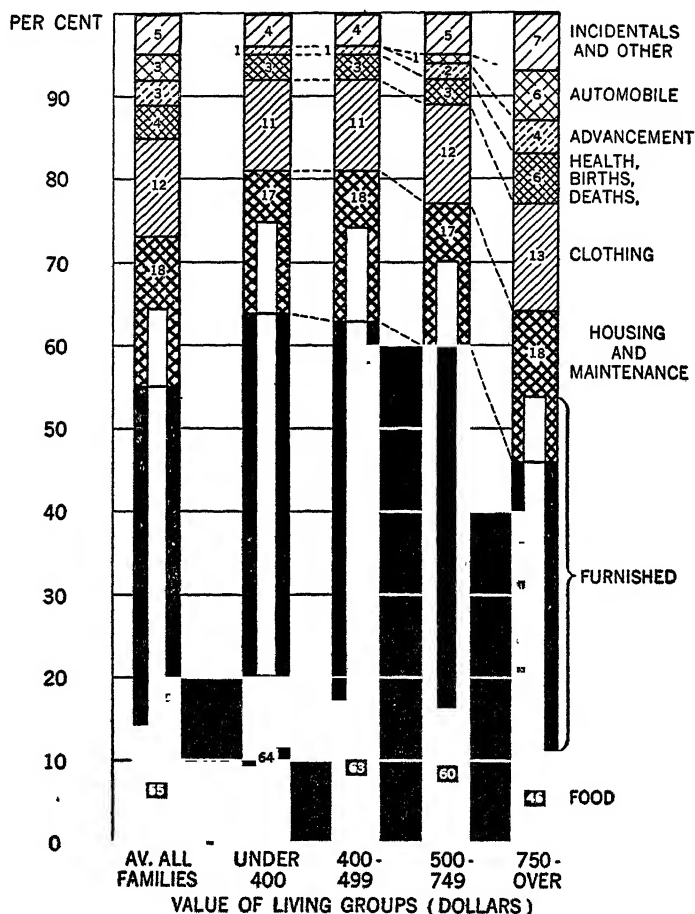
³ Percentages in this column differ from those given on p. 10, *Dept. Agr. Bul. 1214*, owing to reclassification of goods used in order to get more definite comparisons.

⁴ May be low due to probable omission of some of the minor kinds of personal goods not enumerated in detail when records were obtained.

⁵ Represents an average of approximately \$15 per family reported as savings.

* Kirkpatrick, U.S.D.A., *Bulletin No. 1466*, p. 32.

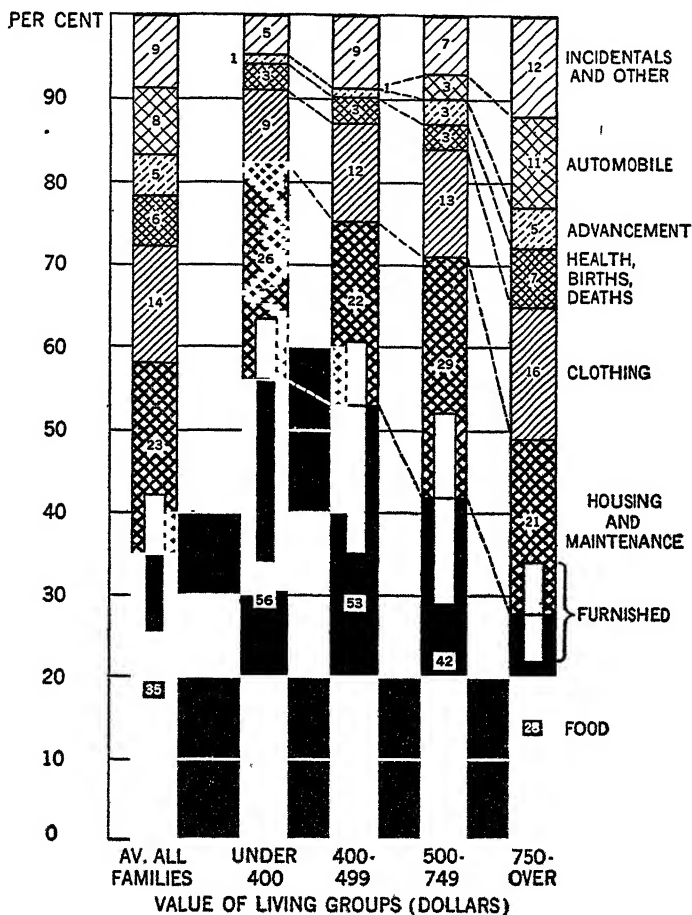
use for household purposes. Maintenance of health includes doctors', nurses', dentists' and hospital charges, and cost of medicine for the year. Insurance includes life, health and accident pre-



45. Percentage Distribution of Total Value of Family Living Among Principal Groups of Goods and Services Consumed, by Value-of-Living Groups, 733 Open-Country Families, Four Appalachian Counties, 1935

Source: C. P. Loomis and L. S. Dodson, "Standard of Living in Four Southern Appalachian Mountain Counties," Farm Security Administration and Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Social Research Report No. X*, Oct., 1938, p. 9.

miums. Personal goods include barbers' services, toilet articles, gifts, candy, tobacco. Advancement goods include school expenses of all kinds, reading matter at home, organization dues, sports, va-



46. Percentage Distribution of Total Value of Family Living Among Principal Groups of Goods and Services Consumed, by Value-of-Living Groups, 83 Village Families, Four Appalachian Counties, 1935

Source: C. P. Loomis and L. S. Dodson, "Standard of Living in Four Southern Appalachian Mountain Counties," Farm Security Administration and Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Social Research Report No. X*, Oct., 1938, p. 10.

Table 37

STUDIES OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF 16,883 FARM FAMILIES IN 20 STATES FOR 12 MONTHS IN THE PERIOD FROM APRIL, 1934, TO MARCH, 1937 *

Locality and Group Studied	Families Studied	Average Size of Family	Average Value of Family Living	AVERAGE VALUE OF GOODS FURNISHED WITHOUT DIRECT EXPENSE				AVERAGE EXPENDITURES FOR GOODS AND SERVICES PURCHASED							Change in Net Worth	
				Food	Housing	Other	Total	Food	Clothing	Housing	Household Operation	Automobile	Medical Care	Other		Total
Study of Consumer Pur- chases: New England, white op- erators.	No.	Persons														
	537	3 3	\$1,175	\$196	\$172	\$96	\$464	\$251	\$ 76	\$35	\$ 72	\$ 80	\$45	\$152	\$ 711	\$ + 26

Pacific, white operators:	888	3.3	1,637	118	202	25	345	412	148	42	146	109	87	258	1,202	+ 221
California																
Oregon and Washington, full-time farm operators	948	3.3	1,188	286	121	36	443	207	105	20	62	124	61	166	745	+ 260
Oregon part-time farm operators	383	3.4	1,508	265	145	19	429	328	120	24	108	199	75	225	1,079	+ 181
Southeast:																
White operators:																
North Carolina and South Carolina	1,945	4.6	1,354	458	109	46	613	172	133	27	55	114	62	178	741	+ 208
Georgia and Mississippi	1,455	4.0	1,145	357	87	46	490	154	117	16	65	96	51	156	655	+ 281
North Carolina, self-sufficing farms	607	4.2	888	470	49	64	583	89	75	6	18	21	25	71	305	+ 35
White sharecroppers:																
North Carolina and South Carolina . . .	632	4.5	871	309	58	33	400	162	89		22	51	47	100	471	+ 54
Georgia and Mississippi	482	4.0	588	266	32	37	335	103	55		16	10	19	50	253	- 21
Negro operators:																
North Carolina and South Carolina	433	5.0	709	270	41	40	351	128	71	4	13	46	28	68	358	+ 44 ^a
Georgia and Mississippi	511	3.9	582	232	28	39	299	119	57	2	12	19	18	56	283	+ 47
Negro sharecroppers:																
North Carolina and South Carolina	639	4.8	589	189	35	33	257	142	65		11	37	23	54	332	+ 45
Georgia and Mississippi	626	4.0	418	156	19	33	208	100	41		8	9	12	40	210	+ 6

^a This is part of the data from a study of 18,496 families. Source: *Agricultural Statistics U.S.D.A. 1938*, p. 464.

cations, travel, benevolences. Unclassified goods include cost of burials and other unspecified outlays.⁵

The United States Department of Agriculture has made a number of studies of the cost of living among farm families. The data show variations according to time, place and social class involved. That of several studies made at various times is presented in Tables 36 and 37 and Figures 45 and 46.

In general, a similar average distribution of expenditure over the main groups of goods appears to prevail among similar income families in different sections of the country. The most important exception is in the item of fuel. For this the per cent of the budget is low in the Southern sections and high in New England and New York, quite as one would expect. The food item is higher in the Southern sections than in other regions, but, except among very low-income families, where it runs from one-half to two-thirds of the budget, it constitutes about two-fifths of the cost of living. Clothing costs about one-seventh; rent slightly over one-tenth; and light and heat under one-twelfth. The outlay for all other purposes averages from one-seventh to over one-fourth of the total.⁶ It is clear that there is a somewhat greater similarity of distribution among families in the same general locality than between those of different sections. Thus the South tends to cluster about one average; the Northeast, another; and the North Central, a third. These sectional differences, however, in no wise obscure the fact of a striking similarity thruout the United States as a whole.

2. From the distribution of income over the various items in the cost of living among farmers and villagers of fair and low incomes in general, we turn to the situation among different classes of farmers. Table 38 will give some idea of how these classes compare in their standards of living.⁷

The first difference to be noted is in the total value of all goods

⁵ E. L. Kirkpatrick and J. T. Sanders, "The Relation between the Ability to Pay and the Standards of Living among Farmers," U.S.D.A. *Bulletin* No. 1382, p. 2.

⁶ E. L. Kirkpatrick and J. T. Sanders, "The Relation between the Ability to Pay and the Standard of Living among Farmers," U.S.D.A. *Bulletin* No. 1382, pp. 32-33.

⁷ Compiled from Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

Table 38

DISTRIBUTION OF AVERAGE EXPENDITURES FOR GOODS FURNISHED BY FARM AND PURCHASED BY 2,886 FAMILIES OF VARIOUS CLASSES OF SELECTED LOCALITIES IN 11 STATES, 1922-1924

Item	All Families	Owners' Families	Tenants' Families	Hired-Men's Families
Number of Families	2,886	1,950	867	69
Size of Family	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.4
Average Expenditure	\$1,597	\$1,767	\$1,356	\$1,237
	Per Cent	Per Cent	Per Cent	Per Cent
Food	41.2	39.9	44.7	44.2
Clothing	14.7	14.8	14.5	13.0
Rent (10% Value of House) ...	12.5	12.8	11.7	10.7
Furniture and Furnishings	2.5	2.5	2.4	4.4
Operating Goods (Fuel) ^a	{ 13.3 (8.2)	{ 13.5 (5.3)	{ 13.1 (5.5)	{ 12.4 (5.9)
Maintenance of Health	3.6	3.7	4.3	6.3
Advancement	7.0	7.4	4.3	3.7
Personal Goods	3.0	2.6	2.5	2.7
Insurance, Life and Health	2.1	2.6	2.4	2.6
Unclassified	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0

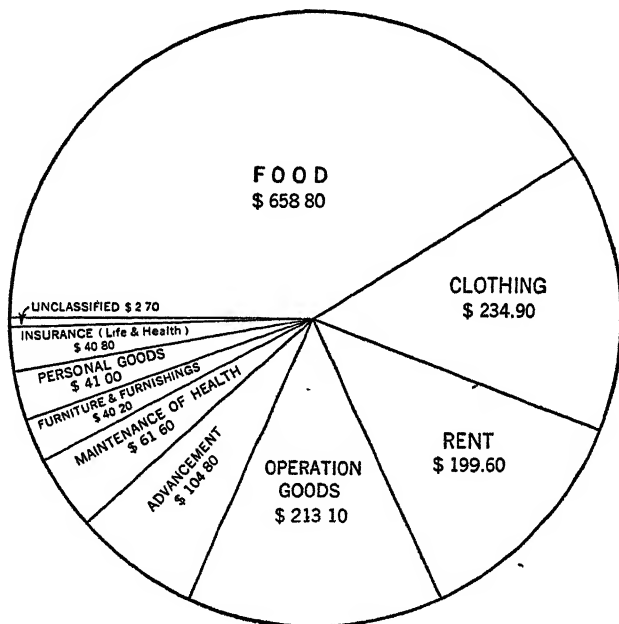
^a Fuel is included in the total and also given in parentheses.

used, the amount rising from hired men to owners. Altho tenants' families were larger than owners', they lived on about a fifth less, while hired-men's families lived on 28 per cent less than owners' and 9 per cent less than tenants'. Owners' families spent from four to five per cent less on food than did tenants' or hired-men's families. Owners spent more on clothing and lived in much better houses than either the tenant or hired class. Owners nearly doubled what the hired class spent on advancement, and far exceeded the tenant class. Clearly, the cost of living varies with the income, and likewise the standard varies according to the total cost of living.

The variation in expenditure for the several items can be seen in Figure 47.

3. Having compared expenditure distribution for items in the cost of living among farm families in various sections and among various classes in the same section, it will now be informing to compare these with workingmen's families. This is done in Table 39.

Obviously farmers and workingmen distribute their expenditures in similar ways with respect to the items listed. The average is about the same for material and non-material goods. When comparisons are made on these points between the two classes according to gradations in the total cost of living, two or three things are brought out.⁸ One is a decrease in the percentage of the total cost



47. Distribution of the Average Value of Goods Among the Principal Groups of Goods Furnished by the Farm and Purchased for Household Use, During One Year

2,886 Farm Homes of Selected Localities in 11 States, 1922-1924. Total value of all goods used, \$1,597.50, average size of household, 4.8 persons; average size of family, 4.4 persons. The value of food is approximately two-fifths, the value of clothing, rent, and operation goods approximately two-fifths, and the value of all other goods slightly less than one-fifth of the value of family living.

Source: Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁸ Kirkpatrick, *Bulletin No. 1466*, p. 35.

of living allocated to food as the expenditure rises. This, however, is more pronounced among farmers than workingmen in industry.⁹ There is an upward trend in the proportion going for clothing as expenditure rises. This is more marked with industrial families. The most striking difference regards rent. It tends downward with industrialists and remains practically unchanged with farmers as the cost of living ascends.

4. There are laws governing the expenditure of income, as appears in the comparisons we have made. They are known as Engel's Laws, formulated by Dr. Ernst Engel, a German statistician, in 1857 from the study of budgets among working class families. He deduced four now famous principles:

1. As the income of a family increased, a smaller percentage of it was expended for food.

Table 39

DISTRIBUTION OF THE AVERAGE VALUE OF GOODS AMONG THE DIFFERENT GROUPS OF GOODS USED PER FAMILY DURING ONE YEAR, FARM FAMILIES, IN COMPARISON WITH WORKINGMEN'S FAMILIES STUDIED BY THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF LABOR *

Goods Used	2,886 Farm Families of Selected Localities in 11 States 1922-1924	861 Farm Families of Selected Localities of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas, 1919	402 Farm Families of Livingston Co., N.Y., for Year Ending Aug 31, 1921 ^b	12,096 Workmen's Families in 92 Industrial Centers, 1918 ^d	11,156 Workmen's Families in 33 Industrial Centers, 1902 ^e
Total value of all goods	\$1,597.50	\$1,436.00	\$2,012.00	\$1,434.40	\$617.80
	Per Cent of Total				
Food, including groceries .	41.2	44.0	39.5 ^c	38.2	43.1
Clothing	14.7	17.7	13.7	16.6	13.0
Rent	12.5	9.7	11.6	13.4	18.1
Fuel and light	5.3	3.7	7.4	5.3 ^f	5.7
All others	26.3	24.9	27.8	26.4	20.1

* Table, *op. cit.*, p. 33, with data from two other studies cited on p. 10, U. S. Dept. Agr. Bulletin No. 1383, by E. L. Kirkpatrick and J. T. Sanders.

^b "Family Living in Farm Homes," U. S. Dept. Agr. Bulletin No. 1214.

^c Percentages in this column differ from those given on p. 10, U. S. Dept. Agr. Bulletin No. 1214, owing to reclassification of goods used to get more definite comparisons.

^d "Cost of Living in the United States," U. S. Dept. Labor Bureau Labor Statistics, Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 9, No. 2.

^e "Cost of Living and Retail Prices of Food," Eighteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1903.

^f Not including 295 families for which rent was combined with fuel and light.

⁹ In comparing industrial workers of 1902 with farmers twenty years later no account is taken of fluctuation of price levels. If this were done it might make a difference in distribution of goods in the budget.

2. As the income of a family increased, the percentage of expenditure for clothing remained proportionately the same.
3. With all the incomes investigated, the percentage of expenditure for rent, fuel and light remained invariably the same.
4. As the income increased in amount, a constantly increasing percentage was expended for education, health, recreation, amusement, etc.¹⁰

These laws do not hold true in every respect for American industrial workers. There is somewhat greater elasticity and freedom of expenditure here. In the case of the second law, there is increase of outlay on clothing as total expenditure rises. And the third law, also, has to be modified, for with American workingmen the outlay for the three items does not vary in the same way.¹¹

But when thus modified to suit American conditions, the studies before us disclose the fact that these laws apply to farmers and industrial laborers alike. The accompanying chart taken from Kirkpatrick's bulletin shows the situation with respect to farm families. There is the same general trend in all the main items. As income rises among farmers, even as among workers, more is devoted to culture and advancement.

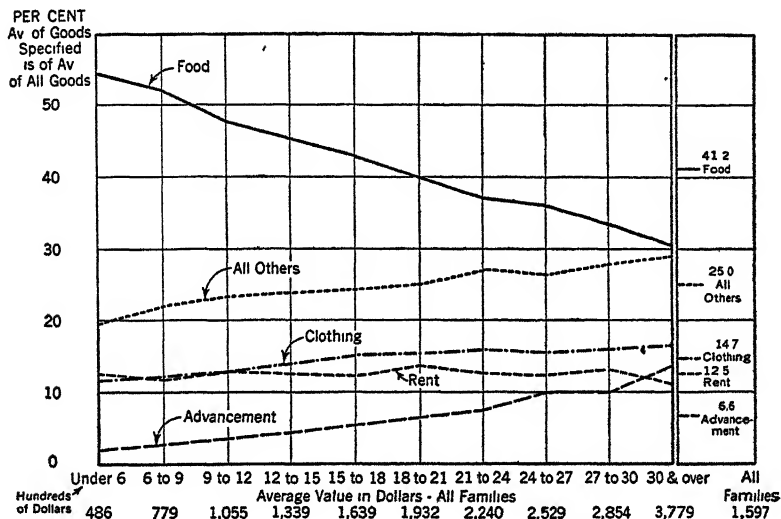
An Adequate Standard of Living

What is an adequate standard of living for farm families? By definition one could formulate one for the family of average size, but in doing so it would be necessary to take into account the conditions under which farmers live. It would hardly do to assume that the standards of other classes are suitable for countrymen. Therefore the only way to find out what is adequate is to study enough farm families to discover at what levels they live most efficiently. The level of efficiency may then be taken as the standard of adequacy.

¹⁰ See R. C. Chapin, *Standard of Living*, p. 11, 1909.

¹¹ W. F. Ogburn, *Quarterly Pub. Amer. Statistical Assoc.*, Vol. 16, No. 126, June, 1919, p. 374; also F. H. Streightoff, *The Standard of Living among Industrial People of America*, pp. 12-20, 1911.

We might assume, however, that the average cost of living as shown by the data at hand would represent an adequate standard. In the study of 861 families in selected counties of Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas in 1919, the average was \$1,436. In that of



48. Distribution of the Average Values of Goods Among the Principal Groups of Goods, by Increase in the Average Value of All Goods Used, During One Year

2,886 Farm Families of Selected Localities of the United States, 1922-1924
(Owners and Tenants, including Hired Men)

Source: Kirkpatrick, *Bulletin 1466*, U. S. Department of Agriculture, p. 28.

The percentage that the value of food forms of the value of all goods decreases from over 54 per cent to almost 31 per cent, with an increase of approximately \$3,000 in the value of all goods used, on an average. Obversely, the percentages that the values of clothing, advancement, and all other goods form increase, altho less markedly. The percentage that the value of rent forms of the total value of all goods remains almost stationary with increased value of all goods used.

402 families of Livingston County, New York, for the year ending August 31, 1921, it was \$2,012. In that of 2,886 families of Mason County, Kentucky, and Delaware County, Ohio, and selected localities in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Alabama, South Carolina, Missouri, Kansas, and

Iowa, for the years 1922-1924, it was \$1,597. For the three studies the average was \$1,681. The distribution of this cost among the various items entering into the family budget shows an average of about 73.6 per cent expended for food, clothing, rent, light and fuel. This leaves an average outlay of 26.4 per cent for other things. The latter group of items includes advancement, which accounts for an average of 6.2 per cent of the total budget. Do these averages represent an adequate standard of living? One cannot say unless it is known how far they conduce to human and social efficiency.

Kirkpatrick and Sanders urge the importance of taking the per cent of outlay for advancement as the true index of the level of any standard of living.¹² It is assumed, of course, that advancement goods will not be purchased at a sacrifice of material things. We know that as income rises, more is spent on advancement. In the study of 2,886 families in eleven states, for instance, the per cent of the total cost of living going to advancement ranged as shown in the following tabulation:

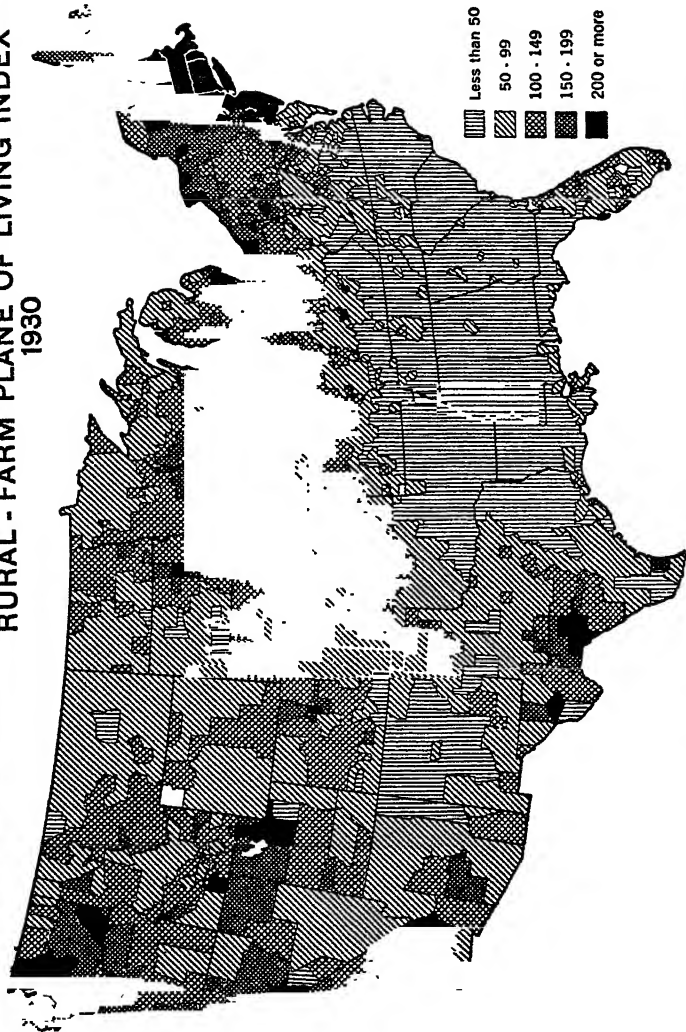
Table 40
PER CENT OF TOTAL COST OF LIVING EXPENDED ON
ADVANCEMENT ^a

Total Cost	No. of Families in Each Group	Size of Family	Per Cent Spent for Advancement
Below \$600	58	3.0	1.9
\$600-899	280	3.4	2.7
\$900-1,199	579	3.7	3.6
\$1,200-1,499	614	4.1	4.4
\$1,500-1,799	492	4.8	5.5
\$1,800-2,099	332	4.8	6.3
\$2,100-2,399	196	5.3	7.5
\$2,400-2,699	116	5.4	9.8
\$2,700-2,999	83	5.7	9.7
\$3,000 and over	136	6.2	13.4
All value groups	2,886	4.4	6.6

^a *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹² *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

RURAL - FARM PLANE OF LIVING INDEX 1930



49. Rural-Farm Plane of Living Index

Source: C. E. Lively and Conrad Taeuber, "Rural Migration in the United States," *W.P.A. Research Monograph XIX*, 1939, p. 77.

At what point in this scale can we say adequacy has been reached? If we take the point of average expenditure for advancement, then at the period indicated it fell somewhere around a two-thousand-dollar-cost-of-living level. That placed 80 per cent of the total sample below the standard. If we take what seems to have been the best year in the farmer's history, 1919, the average estimated income per farm family was just about this amount. But it is doubtful if 20 per cent of the families received the average.¹³ Estimates placed 70 per cent of them at levels ranging from \$1,700 downward.

Much, of course, depends upon the purchasing power of the dollar; hence a lower value of living budget, inadequate when dollars are dear, may be quite adequate when they are cheap. The value of family living among 13,560 white farm operators for a twelve month period between April 1, 1934, and March 1, 1937, was found to range from \$888 to \$1,637.¹⁴ This was obviously below that of 1922-24. But the price level also was lower; hence the real difference was not so great as the figures indicate. Nevertheless, the plane of living of farm families has long been gravitating to lower levels. The median farm income for 1937 of 6,166,000 non-relief farm families was less than \$1,000, with 2,200,000 families having less than \$750 annual income.¹⁵ If therefore, only a small per cent were able to attain adequate standards in the fattest years, it is certain that during the lean years the number able to do so has grown progressively fewer.

It will be noted in Table 39 that up to the \$2,100-\$2,399 level, there was a gradual upward trend for advancement, then a more rapid increase. This same tendency appeared in the study of 861 families in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas.¹⁶ This suggests that possibly at about \$2,400 a point was reached where advancement

¹³ In the very nature of the case our criterion of adequacy is arbitrarily assumed; hence by the method employed a great majority of farmers inevitably have an inadequate standard. But this seems about as suggestive a method as any, with the data at our disposal.

¹⁴ See *Agricultural Statistics*, 1938, p. 464.

¹⁵ *Consumers' Incomes in the United States*, Government Printing Office, 1938.

¹⁶ Kirkpatrick and Sanders, *Ibid.*, p. 11.

began to receive special consideration. It suggests also that at that point funds were sufficient to allow a liberal release for cultural purposes. Hence, it is possible that with about \$2,400 outlay on the cost of living, a fairly adequate standard of living was attained.

If this conclusion is at all justified, the fact must be faced that the vast bulk of our farmers have never been able to afford an adequate standard. They have not come near it as often as have skilled laborers in industry.

How Judge Ability to Afford an Adequate Standard?

These tentative conclusions and the method by which they have been reached may not be valid. Everything has been made to turn on income as the accepted measure of the standard of living. It has been suggested, however, that income is not a complete measure of the farmer's ability to afford an adequate standard of living. For other classes it is valid enough, but for the farmer so many complicative factors are present that possibly "net worth" and rate of accumulation are more reliable measures.¹⁷

By "net worth" is meant the value of all of a given farmer's wealth in terms of dollars, less all indebtedness, for the year for which the cost of living is being calculated. It should be observed that income, by contrast, represents returns for only the year for which cost of living is figured. What the usual income may be is hard to find out, and has not thus far been considered in relation to annual expenditure. Again, goods are often purchased before the income of the year is available. Accumulated or accumulating funds and credit are not often reckoned in income, but may influence the cost of living. Moreover, the upkeep and expansion of farm resources for any given year may curtail the available income for living.¹⁸ Thus it is possible that "net worth" and rate of accumulation of wealth are more reliable criteria.

These criteria were applied in the 1919 study of farm owners in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas. When a coefficient of correla-

¹⁷ Kirkpatrick and Sanders, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

tion between expenditure for advancement and net worth was calculated, a fairly close agreement was found, the figure being 0.31. For rate of accumulation and advancement it was 0.22. When net worth ranged between \$12,500 and \$27,499, expenditure for advancement reached 6.6 per cent of the total budget. Above that amount of wealth the per cent rose rapidly. Similarly, when the annual rate of accumulation reached \$850 to \$1,050, the same rate of expenditure for advancement was attained, with a rapid rise as accumulation increased.¹⁹

The slender data on which this analysis is based render it of no particular value except for the hints it gives as to the economic conditions under which farmers have to live if they are to enjoy a high standard of living.

Improving the Farmer's Standard of Living

There are possibilities of improving the standard apart from income. By accumulating knowledge of the cost of living and the manner in which it is spent, it will become possible to educate people to make a better use of their resources.

Families may be guided to better balanced budgets in the light of available knowledge. For instance, the average cost for families of various sizes and ages, when determined, may become a sort of norm for the guidance of those in like situations. Again, it may show where economies may be secured, and which way the greatest efficiency lies. In brief, it may help to more rationally planned budgets.

Kirkpatrick has worked out a Standard of Life score card that might be effectively used as a sort of normative standard to stimulate better balanced budgeting. Based on a scale of 1,000 points to a home, it is as follows:²⁰

I. Expenditures for Necessities, Comforts and Luxuries

A. Expenditures for Necessities	100
B. Expenditures for Advancement	100

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁰ E. L. Kirkpatrick, "The Standard of Life in a Typical Section of Diversified Farming." Cornell University Agr. Coll. Exper. Station *Bulletin* 423, pp. 49-53.

II. Education of Children	300
III. Social Values Manifested thru Disposition to Improve Environment, Use of Time, and Participation in Community Activities.	
A. Home surroundings and home	235
B. Use of time	80
C. Participation in community activities and organizations	125
D. General outlook	60
Total Values	1,000

In the very nature of the case there can be no absolute standard. Families differ so much in size, age of members, taste, ambition and outlook that they cannot and should not be subjected to arbitrary norms. Nevertheless as a test and corrective of reasonable adequacy an ideal of this sort has suggestive value.

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Topics for Discussion

1. How are farm families in your community whose standard of living is below that of other farmers of the same income class regarded by their neighbors?
2. Where do you find social pressure operating most to determine family living standards, in the city, village, or open country? What is the evidence for your opinion?
3. Do you know of any particular forces causing farm youth to be dissatisfied with the living standards of their families while the ability of such families to maintain present standards grows less? What are the consequences in such cases?
4. To what degree, if any, are farm families of your acquaintance tending to change the distribution of expenditure for the various goods in their budgets? From what items to what items are the shifts? Account for the change.
5. In what way, if any, has the rural community been affected by the changes mentioned in the preceding question?

RURAL HOUSING

The Whole Farm the Home

TO the farm family, home means not merely the house but the whole farm. It is a little world—a homestead—encompassing the domestic sphere with the domains of other families fenced out. Said a farm woman: “You don’t think of your home on a farm as just a space inside four walls. The feeling of home spreads out all around into the garden, the orchards, the henhouses, the barn, the springhouse, because you are all the time helping to produce live things on those places and they, or their products, are all the time coming back into your kitchen from garden, orchard, barn, or henhouse, as a part of the thing you handle and prepare for meals or market every day. It is one of those peculiarities of making a home on the farm.”¹

This American farm home is rather unique. For ordinarily farmers in other countries do not dwell apart in separate farmsteads. They are settled in villages along a common street on which reside the families of other farmers. The fields and forests lie about the village within easy reach and yet apart somewhat. In contrast, the American farmstead represents the single family in isolation.

Housing Conditions

Wide extremes are found in the types of farmers’ houses thruout the country. Naturally, they reflect the economic conditions and the state of material development in the locality. Often, however, one observes even in the most prosperous sections poor houses beside fine barns and outbuildings. This is seen especially in the Middle

¹ Emily Hoag Sawtelle, “The Advantages of Farm Life,” U.S.D.A., March, 1924.

West and the Northwest. It indicates the farmer's sense of relative values, for he is inclined to put working capital before family welfare. However, he should not be too hastily or harshly judged for this, since the saying is very true that "a barn can build a house sooner than a house can build a barn." Farmers judge farmers by the money-making equipment of their farms, not by any display, and a good house built before a good barn is likely to be considered more of a display than an asset.

A number of surveys of farm housing have been made and furnish fairly representative data on a number of points. Size and number of rooms is one criterion of adequacy. The standard of minimum comfort set up by urban housing experts calls for one and one-half rooms to the person and one and one-half persons to the bedroom. An adequate house, therefore, should have three rooms to each two inhabitants and two bedrooms for each 3 persons.

In the light of this standard what do the surveys of country homes reveal? One of 402 farm homes in Livingston County, New York, showed 1.9 rooms per person and 1 bedroom per person. In over 40 per cent of the cases an average of more than 2 rooms was used per person. No evidence of overcrowding was found.² In Michigan a study of 527 rural farm families showed the same average number of rooms per person as in the New York case.³ A survey of 1,140 farm dwellings in various typical areas of Nebraska found houses ranging all the way from 2 to 14 rooms.⁴ The typical house of farm owners and part-owners had 7 rooms, while that of tenants had 6 rooms. Only 1.4 per cent of all were 2-room houses. The average household had 6.4 rooms and 3.2 bedrooms for an average of 4.6 persons. These averages obviously came very close, tho not quite up to the minimum urban standard.

From another survey of 657 homes in eleven communities of eleven counties of West Virginia we get a glimpse of the Appa-

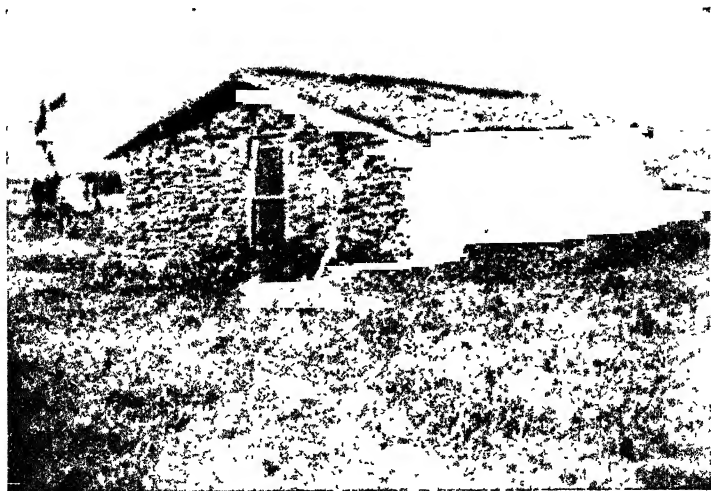
² "Family Living in Farm Homes," U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, *Bulletin No. 1214*, January, 1924, pp. 13-14.

³ C. R. Hoffer, "Some Characteristics of Rural Families in Three Michigan Communities," Michigan State College Agr. Exp. Station, *Special Bulletin No. 283*, Apr., 1937.

⁴ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Homes," University of Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin 191*, May, 1923.



50. The Pioneer Farmer's House in the "Wooded Wilderness" of the Middle West



51. The Pioneer Farmer's House on the Western Prairie

lachian region.⁵ Owners' houses were found to average 5.84 rooms; tenants', 5.77, and laborers', 4.79. In terms of the number of rooms per person, these figures mean that owners have 1.20; tenants, 1.01; and laborers, 1.02.⁶ In this case the houses of tenants and laborers are manifestly lacking in an adequate number of rooms.

A study of 1,014 farm residents in North Carolina reveals the typical housing situation in wide areas of the rural South.⁷ Here it was found that 10.6 per cent of the farm owners and 17.6 per cent of the landless were living in one or two room houses, and that 14.4 per cent of whites and 13.9 per cent of Negroes lived in such houses. 14.2 per cent of all families dwelt in houses having less than three

Table 41

AVERAGE PERSONS PER ROOM AND BEDROOM
IN NORTH CAROLINA ^a

	Room	Bedroom
Operator landlords		
White .....	.825	1.47
Black	1.45	1.87
Owner operators		
White	1.19	2.06
Black	1.5	2.1
Tenants		
White	1.24	1.99
Black	1.46	2.16
Croppers		
White	1.34	2.16
Black	1.57	2.44
Total		
White	1.11	1.89
Black	1.52	2.27

^a *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵ National Child Labor Committee, *Rural Child Welfare*. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1922.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁷ C. C. Taylor and C. C. Zimmerman, *Economic and Social Conditions of North Carolina Farmers*, Univ. of N.C., 1922.

rooms.⁸ The average number of persons per room and per bedroom for these various classes appears in the preceding table.

These averages do not indicate a general lack of room, tho they do show a marked failure to reach standards in bedroom space. Averages, of course, do not reveal the extremes; they tend to conceal them. In those cases where a considerable percentage of families live in one- and two-room cabins, as is the case with the landless class thruout the South and Southwest, there is much overcrowding. A survey of farm houses in a mountain county of Virginia in 1934 showed that of "1,820 houses, 153 had 10 or more regular occupants and that 47 of the 153 had only one to four rooms."⁹

The conclusion of the surveyors in Nebraska was that general lack of room in farm houses was not at all serious.¹⁰ Outside the South, as indicated, this conclusion would seem to be fairly valid for the country at large. However, a relatively negligible number of much overcrowded farm homes can be found in almost every section.

The Committee on Farm and Village Housing of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership made a survey in 24 different farming regions. Its findings will serve as a general summary. The average number of rooms in farm houses was found to range from 5.1 in the Great Plains to 8.1 in the New England and New York areas. The regions having the smallest and poorest houses were the Cotton Belt, the Appalachian-Ozark Highlands, the Great Plains, and the Great Basin. A majority of all the nation's farm houses were found to be over one story and generally roomy enough for the families dwelling in them. It is in the South, on the Great Plains, and thruout the Great Basin that the percentage of houses over one story is low, running from less than a fifth to about 40 per cent. In four sections of the North and East the number of such houses will run above 90 per cent.¹¹

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

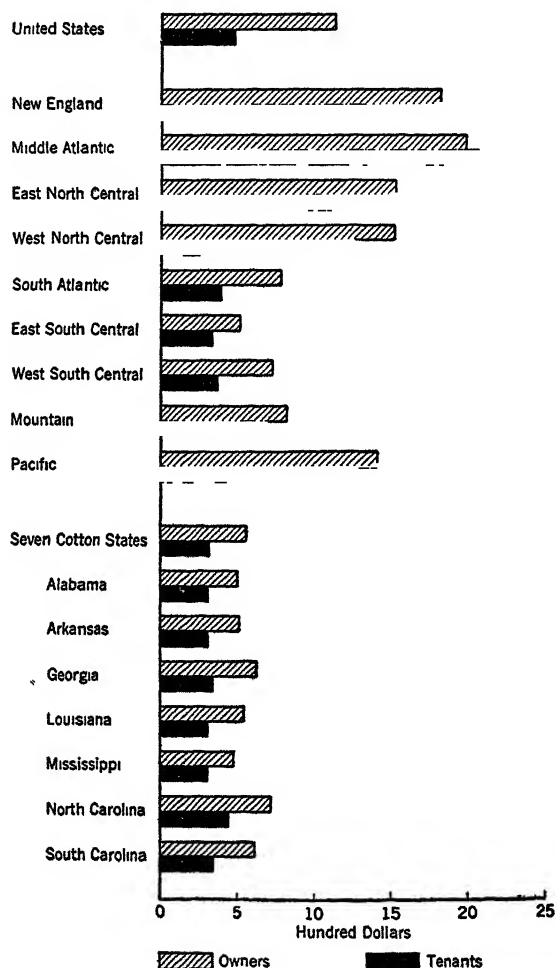
⁹ C. G. Burr and W. E. Garnett, "Marginal Housing," Virginia Agr. Exp. Station, W.P.A.-F.S.A. *Rural Sociology Report*, No. 8, June, 1939, p. 13.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 13, 16.

¹¹ J. M. Gries and James Ford, *Farm and Village Housing*, Washington, 1932.

Figure 52 gives a complete picture of the situation on the basis of the 1930 values.

It is clear that in the Cotton Belt and the Appalachian region



52. Median Value of Farm Dwellings, by Tenure, 1930

Source: Fifteenth Census of the United States; 1930. Special Release. T. J. Woofert, Jr. "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," *W.P.A. Research Monograph V*, 1936, p. 93.

large numbers of farmers live in the most primitive and inadequate sort of dwellings. It will be seen from Figure 52 that in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas the average value of farm dwellings in 1930 was under \$500. In fourteen Southern States, including West Virginia, the average value was found to be but \$632. Thus it is apparent that one-third or more of the farmers of America are very poorly housed. In a considerable number of submarginal land areas, the sharecropper sections of the South, and rural regions employing seasonal and migratory labor, the housing conditions for great numbers of people are deplorable. Employers consider that any kind of shelter or shanty is good enough for migratory workers in sugar beets, hops, truck farming, and fish and vegetable canning. The result is a generally degraded condition of living for this class of people. Thus for many rural dwellers housing facilities are comparable to the worst slum tenement districts of our great cities.

The marginal home, valued at \$500 or less, as found in Virginia, has been described as follows: "The average home is a two or three room cottage built of rough siding, boards running up and down, and stripped. Very rarely are they underpinned. There are usually no screens and almost never water in the house. They live in crowded conditions; as many as three sleep in a bed. In some cases the floors are earth in the kitchen. There is almost never an arrangement for a bath. There is no arrangement for the girls to have company at home. The furniture is very inadequate and in very poor repair."¹²

Poor housing conditions over wide areas of rural America are in no small measure due to the tenantry system and the attitudes of landlords. This is the major cause in the South and Southwest. In the Middle West, where farm tenancy has risen rapidly often to as high a level as in the South; no such generally extreme results have yet appeared. The figures already given speak to this point. But it is not unlikely that the future will see like conditions wherever absentee landlordism prevails. The 1930 census reports that of the 12,-

¹² Burr and Garnett, *op. cit.*, p. 11, quoted from *Report of Homemaking. Education for out-of-school Youth and Adults in Virginia.*

158,277 rural dwellings, 45 per cent were rented. This, compared with 55.7 per cent for the cities, indicates a general trend toward urban conditions.

Constructive Agencies

The amended Federal Housing Administration extended the activities of that agency into rural and semi-rural mortgage guarantees. This opened the possibility at least for building farm dwellings. The Resettlement Administration, which the Farm Security Administration absorbed, was interested not only in shifting people from poor to better land, but in seeing that they were properly housed. This responsibility for providing low-cost housing has been assumed by the Farm Security Administration. Moreover, it has worked out designs for such houses. Means for securing them are nominally provided by the Farm Tenant Bill, but the funds are too meager to be of real significance. Provision can be made for housing only about 50,000 persons. The prospects for any large-scale governmental financing of rural housing are not encouraging. The tenant class, whose needs are greatest, will continue to suffer.

About all that is being done is of an educational nature. The Farm Bureau Federation, and the Grange should be mentioned in this connection, for they have this item on their programs.

Modern Conveniences and Farm Homes

Water piped into the house is one of the requirements of a modern dwelling. However, relatively few farm houses have such arrangements. "There is every gradation from the most unmodern and unsanitary open well, from which water is drawn with wheel and bucket and carried to the house, on thru the more convenient arrangement of pump in the kitchen or water piped into the house to the truly modern water system with hot and cold water flowing on one or more floors of the house."¹³

¹³ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Homes," University of Nebraska Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 191*, May, 1923, pp. 41-42.

The 1930 census disclosed 15.8 per cent of the farm houses as having "water piped in." The variation between sections of the country was great, ranging from 1.5 per cent of the houses in Arkansas to nearly 75 per cent in Massachusetts. New England and the Pacific sections stood at the top, with 63.9 and 59.7 per cent respectively. The Middle Atlantic followed, with 37.9 per cent; the East North Central and the Mountain came third, with one-fifth of the houses; the West North Central was next, with one-sixth; the West South Central reported only 8 per cent; the South Atlantic, a bare sixteenth; and the East South Central was last, with 2.6 per cent.

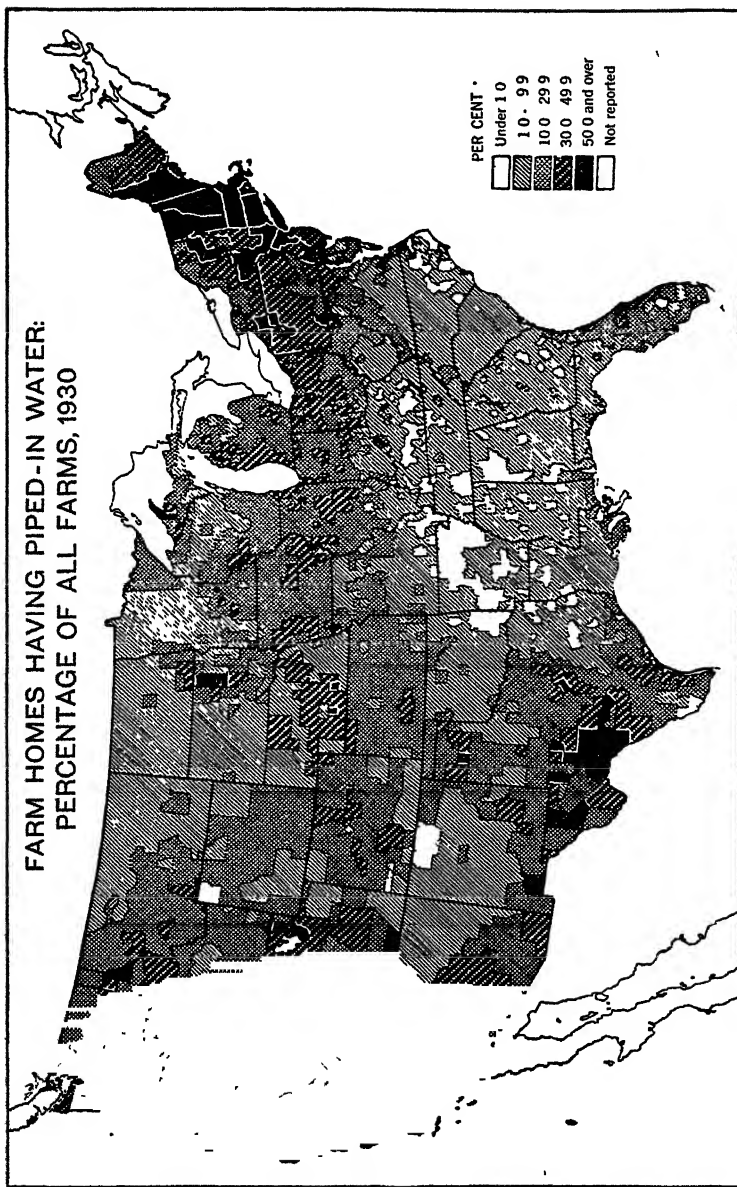
The real test of a modern water system, however, is the presence of a bathroom. That was found in but 8.4 per cent of the farm houses. The sections ranked in the same order as given above, only with lower averages. The range was all the way from 43.2 per cent for the Pacific group (where California heads the 48 states with 56.8 per cent) to the West South Central group, with an average of 1.6 per cent. The West in general averaged 27.7 per cent; the South, 3.4 per cent; and the North, 11.0 per cent. A recent survey of social conditions among farmers in the Cotton Belt and the Corn Belt, made by the Farm Security Administration and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, has revealed striking contrasts in the percentage of such conveniences used in the two areas. In the Corn Belt 20 per cent of the homes had running water; 53 per cent, kitchen sinks with drain; and 15 per cent, indoor toilets. In the South among the whites the corresponding figures were 10, 12, and 4 per cent, and among the Negroes 1, 1, and 0.¹⁴

Surveys of localities show important differences between houses occupied by farm owners and by tenants. In Nebraska it was found that about 20 per cent of all operators had bath tubs in their houses. It varied from 33 per cent of owners to 12 per cent of tenants.¹⁵

¹⁴ E. C. Schuler, "Social Status and Farm Tenure-Attitudes and Social Conditions of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt Farmers," Farm Security Administration and Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Social Research Report No. IV*, April, 1938, p. 57.

¹⁵ J. O. Rankin, "Housing and Operation Costs on Nebraska Farms," Nebraska Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 264*, 1931.

FARM HOMES HAVING PIPED-IN WATER:
PERCENTAGE OF ALL FARMS, 1930



53. Farm Homes with Piped-in Water, 1930

Source: C. C. Taylor, Helen W. Wheeler and E. L. Kirkpatrick, "Disadvantaged Classes in American Agriculture," U.S.D.A. *Social Research Report No. VIII*, April, 1938, p. 110.

In North Carolina the average for the area surveyed was only .885 per cent of farm houses. The range was from 1.84 per cent for land owners to 1.23 per cent for landless farmers among the whites and none at all for Negroes.¹⁶ Indoor toilets were found in 1.24 per cent of the owners' houses and in .82 per cent of the houses of the landless among the whites in North Carolina. The blacks were wholly without such facilities. The average for all farm homes was .591 per cent.¹⁷ In fact, thruout the South many have no toilets of any kind, indoors or out. The building of toilets has been a public health project in several states. The W.P.A. has taken it up in recent years. In Virginia over 100,000 sanitary privies have been installed under W.P.A.¹⁸ In Nebraska 10.2 per cent of all farm homes had indoor toilets. For owners it was 14.2 and for tenants 5.9 per cent.¹⁹ Apparently about 91 per cent of the rural houses of America have outdoor toilets or none at all.

Perhaps no improvement for the farm is so useful as a modern water plant. A Minnesota engineer has calculated that the average housewife who carries water from an outdoor well or rain-barrel will spend 20 eight-hour days a year in doing it. If she carries the waste water out again, it will add 10 more days of work. Thus, the farm woman is sentenced "to 30 days hard labor every year carrying water."²⁰ Quite apart from the labor involved where a modern water plant is wanting, the question of family health is involved. Health is likely to depend more or less upon the adequacy of the domestic water supply. The quantity of water used will depend upon the ease with which it can be procured. Naturally, a modern plumbing system conduces to its abundant use. The following from *Farm and Village Housing* indicates the minimum amount used per person per day with different kinds of equipment under rural conditions: When carried by hand, 6-8 gallons; when got from a kitchen-sink pump, 8 gallons; when drawn from a

¹⁶ Taylor and Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

¹⁷ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Homes," Nebraska Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin* No. 191, May, 1923, p. 40.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Burr and Garnett, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

²⁰ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Homes," Nebraska Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin* No. 191, May, 1923, p. 8.

kitchen-sink faucet, 15 gallons; when there is running hot and cold water in the kitchen, 25 gallons; and, finally, with complete plumbing, 30-40 gallons.²¹

Heating by modern means, i. e., by other than stoves or fireplaces, is less common than water piped into the house. In Nebraska only 6.3 per cent of the houses had modern heating. Among owners it was 8.8 per cent; part owners, 9.4 per cent; and tenants, 2.8 per cent.²² In North Carolina the sample surveyed showed but 3.1 per cent of all houses with "other than fireplace."

Screening is indispensable for comfortable and sanitary living. The Nebraska data indicated from 95 to 99 per cent of all farm houses as having screened windows and doors. No great difference was found between owners and tenants in this respect. Screened porches were less prevalent, but averaged from 41 to about 47 per cent for back porches and around 16 per cent for front porches.²³ The contrast with North Carolina conditions was striking. In the latter state only 30.4 per cent of the land owners and 12 per cent of the tenants had houses with doors and windows fully screened. The averages were 27.5 per cent for whites, 3.9 per cent for Negroes, and 20.9 per cent for all the homes surveyed.²⁴

Telephones may be listed as another convenience in the home. On this we have the data of the Federal Census for the whole country. Figure 54 shows their distribution.

For 1930, 34.0 per cent of all farm houses were reported supplied with telephones. It varied from 65.1 per cent in the West North Central to 11.1 per cent in the South Atlantic States. In Iowa 84.2 per cent of the homes were equipped. Kansas and Nebraska approximated three-fourths. In general, the East and West North Central states, together with New England, averaged about two-thirds of the homes. The Middle Atlantic and the Pacific states approximated one-half. The Mountain section averaged better than

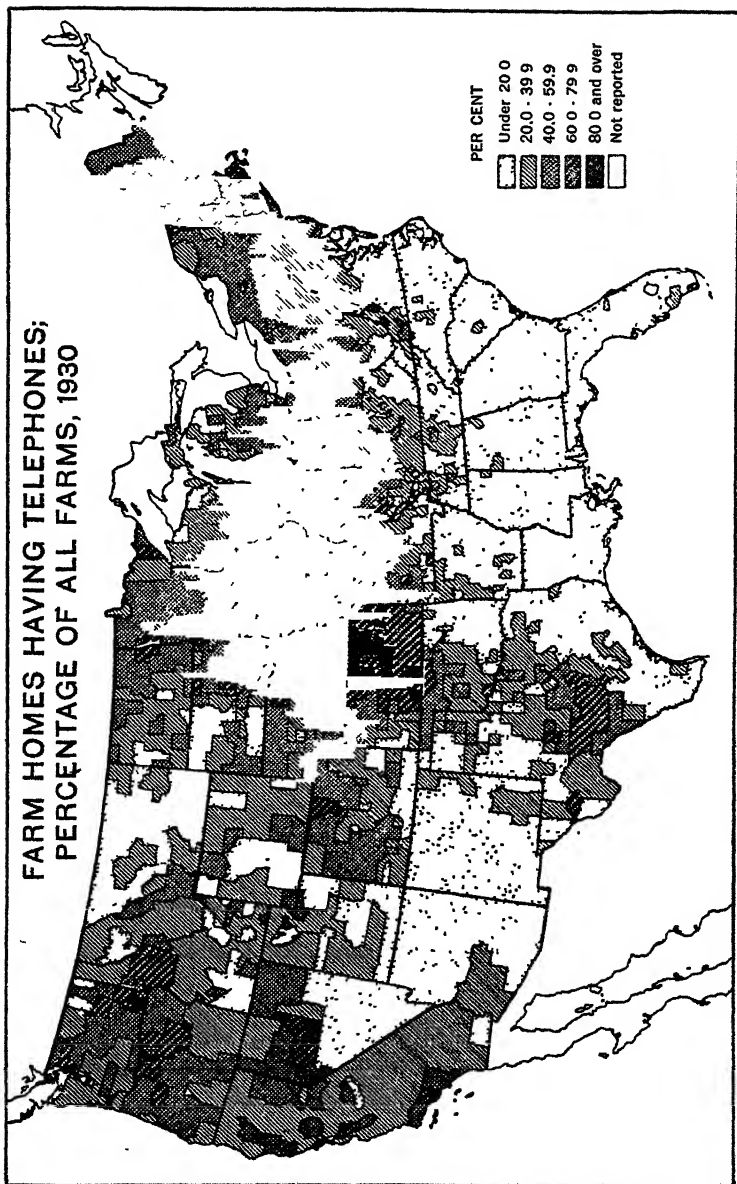
²¹ *Farm and Village Housing*, The President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, 1932, p. 177.

²² "What Farm Women Are Thinking," University of Minnesota Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 71*, May, 1923, p. 13.

²³ Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Homes," Nebraska Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 191*, May, 1923, p. 8.

²⁴ Taylor and Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

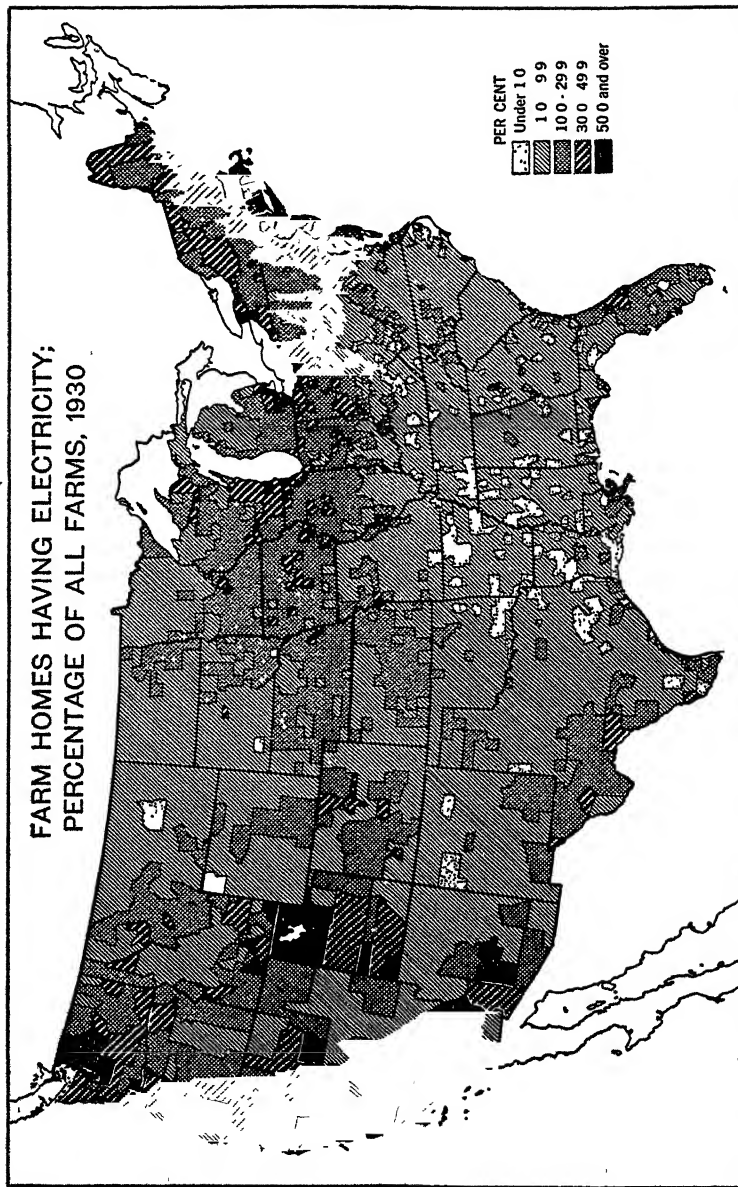
FARM HOMES HAVING TELEPHONES; PERCENTAGE OF ALL FARMS, 1930



54- Farms with Telephones, 1930

Source: Taylor, Wheeler, and Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

FARM HOMES HAVING ELECTRICITY;
PERCENTAGE OF ALL FARMS, 1930



55. Farm Homes Having Electricity, 1930

Source: Taylor, Wheeler, and Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

one-fourth, while the South in general fell to 11 to 16 per cent, with Louisiana, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Georgia ranging from less than 4 to 6 per cent.

Lighting by modern means is coming into use. The 1930 census reported that 13.4 per cent of the farm homes had electricity. Rural electrification has been rapidly extended since R.E.A. was launched in 1935. In three years nearly as many farms were reached as in the three preceding decades. By June 30, 1938, some 19.1 per cent of the farms were being served.²⁵ Now the percentage is probably double that. Figure 55 gives the 1930 distribution.

It seems that a very small per cent of the rural houses even in the most progressive states of the Union have all three of the conveniences mentioned. In Nebraska nearly two decades ago, for instance, only about 2 per cent of all houses were so equipped.²⁶

Along with the telephone, the radio has been widely introduced into the country. The 1930 census showed 20.8 per cent of all farms as having it. New England led with 44.6 per cent, and was followed by the Middle Atlantic States with 42.0 per cent. The West North Central Division was not far behind, with 39.2 per cent. Then came the East North Central and the Pacific, with 36.5 per cent and 36.0 per cent respectively. The Mountain Division, with 24.9 per cent, was the last of the high areas. The three Southern sections fell very low, the West South Central having 6.2 per cent; the South Atlantic, 5.1 per cent; and the East South Central, only 3.4 per cent. Figure 56 shows the distribution.

Needs of Farm Homes

The foregoing canvass of the equipment of farm homes is not exhaustive. No particular attention has been given, for instance, to the use of motor and electric power for lightening labor. However, rural electrification is being rapidly extended. This means that

²⁵ 1938 Report of Rural Electrification Administration, Washington, January, 1938.

²⁶ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Homes," Nebraska Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin* No. 191, May, 1923, pp. 41-42.

electric power is being used in a variety of ways in farm homes. Mechanical devices, such as cream separators, washing machines, iceless refrigerators, electric pumps, and vacuum cleaners are being introduced as electric power becomes available. By means of such devices the heavy burdens of the country women are greatly lightened. Labor-saving power and mechanisms are needed over wide areas. These, coupled with modern housing, are unquestionably essential requirements for much of rural America.

These are becoming wants of the present generation of farm women, and the farmer's habitual indifference toward the equipment of the home is being broken down. The following declaration of a group of Nebraskan farm women seems fairly typical of the new attitude. They called for:

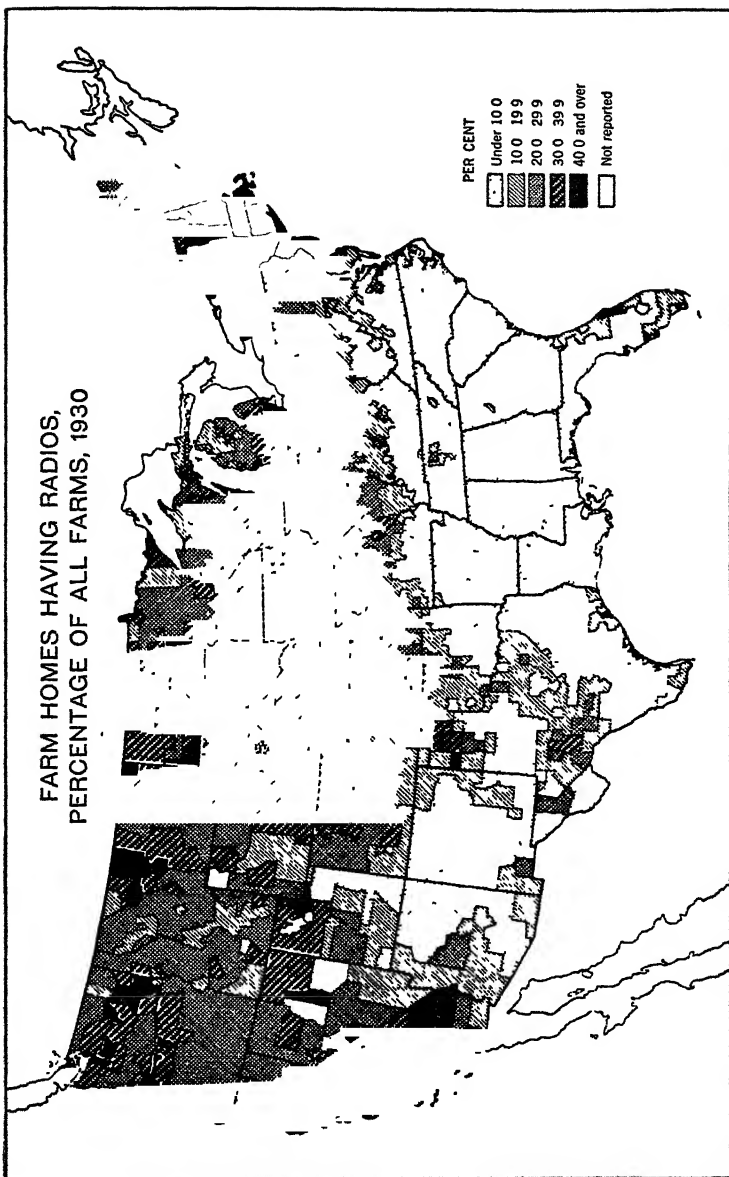
1. "A power washing machine for the house for every tractor bought for the farm."
2. "A bath tub in the house for every binder on the farm."
3. "Running water in the kitchen for every riding plow for the fields."
4. "A kerosene cook-stove for every auto truck."
5. "A fireless cooker for every new mowing machine."
6. "Our share in the farm-income."

These modest demands are no doubt quite within the financial reach of a majority of country homes in a state like Nebraska, and indeed of the homes in a few other states where farm incomes range above the average. But in the majority of states and for the majority of farms this standard does not seem to come within grasp.

For one reason the cost is much higher for the farm than for the city home. Modern lighting and water systems are thus reserved chiefly for the most prosperous farms. Still, there are possibilities of coöperation in securing improvements at a cost not beyond the reach of the average farmer in many sections of the country.

The Committee on Farm and Village Housing of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership stated that modern equipment and conveniences had received too little attention generally among farmers. It recognized the fact that climatic conditions, customs, and the economic status of the farm

FARM HOMES HAVING RADIOS,
PERCENTAGE OF ALL FARMS, 1930



56. Farm Homes Having Radios, 1930

Source: Taylor, Wheeler, and Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

family have more often determined the presence or absence of modern heating, lighting, water and sewage systems than has lack of interest.

The authors of the circular on *Marginal Housing* in Virginia attribute poor housing and lack of home conveniences to the following factors: "(1) Lack of income to make improvements; (2) Lack of aspiration for improvements; (3) Lack of knowledge as to how to make the best of available resources; (4) Indifference on the part of some landlords as to the living conditions of their tenants and wage laborers; (5) Competing desires, that is, preference on the part of many marginally housed folk for other types of expenditure than housing improvement, or home convenience."²⁷

The problem appears frequently to involve attitudes as well as other factors. It is often a matter of educating country people to a proper standard of living. But when once the benefits to be derived are clearly demonstrated, old standards and habits tend to give way. If one farmer in a neighborhood installs a modern heating, light or water plant, others are likely to see the advantages and to follow suit.

Standards are often wanting not merely with reference to conveniences but with respect to the entire setting of the family life. There is universal need for the aesthetic development of farm homes as regards both their interior and landscape aspects. European peasants put American farmers to shame in this.

As the report mentioned above emphasized, a proper setting will enrich and strengthen the family life and make easy the "formation of habits of order, cleanliness, healthful living, and an appreciation of beauty." Moreover, it will "stimulate an idealism that can give new values to the economic motive in society, and in the midst of financial depressions hold rural living above the ravages." There is then, it concluded, need for the development of housing standards that are within reach of different economic groups in the farm and village population, and the education of this population in the acceptance and realization of such standards.

Country homes have many natural advantages over those of the

RURAL HOUSING

city in the matter of location and surroundings. They do not suffer from inadequate light and fresh air. There is no lack of the green out-of-doors. They are not beset by the filthy dust of streets, noisome smells of urban districts, or the din of crowded thoroughfares. The peaceful, wholesome, open spaces are theirs. In these things many find deep satisfaction. But these advantages, in the estimation of many others, are more than outweighed by the lack of modern houses and of conveniences that are a matter of course in every city.

The need, therefore, for modern houses with comfort-giving and labor-saving equipment on the farms is, along with a touch of beauty, in the last analysis, a distinctively sociological need. To supply it is to emancipate the country woman from much drudgery, to increase her leisure, give a large measure of contentment, and thereby to strengthen the ties that bind her to the rural community.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Debate the question: Resolved that rural slums such as unsanitary living implies are due to a slum type of folks rather than to conditions.
2. Do city housing norms, relative to number of rooms, and the number of square feet per person apply equally to the country or should the latter be measured by a different criterion?
3. Account for so little effort to beautify the farmstead in America.
4. What are the things most wanted in the farm homes of your community?
5. Make a list of the factors working for and against better rural housing and draw your own conclusions as to the prospects.

RURAL POVERTY AND RELIEF

FROM the study of rural wealth, income, and the standard of living, it has become obvious that many country people have been living close to the poverty line or have fallen beneath it. Altho students of rural conditions have long been aware of the existence of country slums and of disadvantaged or submerged classes, such as the sharecroppers of the South, no one fully realized how precarious the lot of a large part of the country population was and how quickly millions could be plunged into a state of destitution until the industrial depression revealed the true situation. Now, after eight years of federal relief of the impoverished classes of the country, during which time careful studies of the problem have been made by the governmental organizations directly concerned and by other research agencies as well, the facts have become pretty clear. An effort will be made to present the most important aspects of the problem here.

Extent of Rural Poverty

There is no exact measure of poverty nor any definite method of determining its extent. The relief rolls of public and private agencies indicate something of the prevalence of pauperism and dependency, but they do not disclose the amount of destitution or how far a population lacks the necessities of life. However, relief data are about all we have on the rural situation. Before the industrial depression rural poverty received very little attention. It was not generally thought of as a serious social problem. There were, to be sure, indigent people for whom the counties usually provided a "poor farm" and always some unfortunates who were "on the town" if neighborly aid proved inadequate, and certain

regions were known to be poor; but apart from such cases destitution was not normally associated with country life. It was looked upon as essentially an evil of the cities.

Even down to the last quarter of 1932 it is estimated that only about 100,000 rural people, or not over 1 per cent of the rural families, were being aided under local poor laws. However, when federal aid became available during the closing months of that year, the relief rolls grew rapidly, until by March, 1933, they contained 1,225,000 cases, or one-tenth of the rural families of America. For two years they continued to climb, until by January, 1935, they reached a peak.¹ It is estimated that at that date from two to two and a half million families, or 10,000,000 rural people, were receiving aid. From the peak the numbers fell off as the Works Program, rural rehabilitation schemes, and other agencies took care of many. The peak figures by no means represented the total number given assistance, for the personnel of the rolls was constantly changing. For instance, half of those on the rolls in February, 1935, were off by June, but over a third as many had been added either as new cases or reinstatements. So it has continued.² Thus the number of rural families receiving public or private assistance for a period at one time or another during the depression years is believed to aggregate fully three and a half millions, or more than a fourth of the total. Even this number does not include other hundreds of thousands who have been in sore need of the necessities of life but who have struggled along without going on relief. All in all, it is estimated that more than one-third of the rural families of the nation have suffered poverty.³ The total cost of relief since 1930 runs well over four billion dollars.

Rural and Urban Poverty Compared

It is difficult to separate rural from urban recipients of relief, but estimates have been made of the relative numbers in each

¹ A. R. Mangus, "Changing Aspects of Rural Relief," *WPA Research Monograph XIV*, 1939, p. 18.

² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³ T. J. Woofter, Jr., and Ellen Winston, *Seven Lean Years*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1939, p. 12.

group. The figures as given by the Works Progress Administration in the spring of 1935, when relief was not at the peak, appear in Table 42. In addition to farm families on direct relief in June, 1935, there were 203,612 farm families that had secured loans under the rural rehabilitation program. With duplications eliminated,

Table 42

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF RURAL AND URBAN CASES
RECEIVING RELIEF UNDER THE GENERAL RELIEF
PROGRAM, AND USUAL OCCUPATION OF THE
HEADS OF RURAL CASES, JUNE, 1935 ^a

RESIDENCE AND USUAL OCCUPATION	CASES UNDER GENERAL RELIEF PROGRAM	
	Number	Per Cent
All Cases	4,534,000	100.0
Rural ^b	1,427,000	31.5
Urban	3,107,000	68.5
Rural Cases	1,427,000	100.0
Agricultural heads	537,000	38.
Farm operators	390,000	28.
Owners	138,000	10.
Tenants ^d	208,000	15.
Croppers	44,000	3.
Farm laborers	147,000	10.
All others	890,000	62.

^a Berta Asch and A. R. Mangus, "Farmers on Relief and Rehabilitation," *WPA Research Monograph VIII*, 1937, p. 4.

^b Open country or centers of less than 2,500 population.

^c Includes farm operators residing in towns of 2,500 to 5,000 population, the town cases constitute less than 2 per cent of all cases.

^d Exclusive of croppers in the two cotton areas.

this meant that 9 per cent of all farmers enumerated in the 1935 census were receiving aid. This was only half as many as were on relief in the cities, but the farm figures do not include laborers, since data for the households of such were not available.⁴ In fact, many laborers were not heads of households. If all farm classes

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

were included, the percentage on relief would be considerably higher. The average does not reveal the extremes. In fourteen states there were from 10 to 36 per cent of all farm operators receiving aid. The table indicates that a smaller percentage of the rural population than of the urban was on relief, and even if all types of assistance to farmers had been taken into account, it is probable the rural would still have made a better showing than the urban.

General Causal Factors in Rural Poverty

It is not often that poverty is due to a single factor. It is more likely to arise from a combination of circumstances. However, in the combination there may be an initial or preponderating cause. In discussing the agencies inducing rural destitution, we shall call attention to those which seem to play the major role in various groups of cases. Since some factors are cumulative in their effects and eventually prove disastrous, and others are precipitous, we shall consider them under two heads.

Cumulative factors include a number of farm practices and developments, the ultimate consequence of which is impoverishment. The main ones may be described.⁵

1. Farming submarginal land accounts for the destitution of a large number of farm families. The National Resources Board estimated that there are 75 million acres of such land in nearly 450,000 farms.⁶ It is heavily concentrated in the Western Great Plains, the Eastern Cotton Belt, the Appalachian-Ozark region, and the Cut-Over areas about the Great Lakes. Those who try to make a living on such soil never rise above the poverty line and usually find their lot growing progressively worse.

2. Improper cultivation of the land brings many to a state of dependency. Where such cultivation prevails, wind and water erosion may destroy the soil until diminishing returns reduce the till-

⁵ See Asch and Mangus, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-12; P. G. Beck and M. C. Forster, "Six Rural Problem Areas, Relief—Resources—Rehabilitation," *Research Monograph 1*, Emergency Relief Administration, 1935.

⁶ *National Resources Board Report*, Dec. 1, 1934, pp. 15-16.

ers to poverty. The National Resources Board estimates that 35 million acres have been completely destroyed, 125 million acres severely damaged, and another 100 million acres are on the way to ruin.⁷ The areas subject to these conditions are largely in the hilly Southeastern Cotton Belt, where heavy rain fall washes away the soil, and on the Western Great Plains, where drought and wind cause unprotected soil to blow away.

3. Too small farms constitute a third cause of impoverishment. Probably nearly 40 per cent of all farms are under 50 acres. In general, with the ordinary type of farming, that is too limited an area to afford a family living. Moreover, for an adequate and dependable income poor or semi-arid soil requires a larger acreage than does good soil and larger than many farms on marginal lands contain. The result is often over-cropping and soil exhaustion. On farms of insufficient acreage no surplus can be accumulated with which to meet crop failures; hence the dwellers on them are likely to be plunged into misery.

4. Over-commercialized farming, where it means growing a single crop, jeopardizes the economic status of many. For their living depends entirely upon the production and sale of the crop. They do not raise foodstuffs for home consumption, nor on small farms are they often able to accumulate a surplus in fat years to carry them thru lean ones or a period of low prices. Thus crop failures leave them without resources. This is the situation with many in the Cotton Belt, the tobacco sections, and the wheat regions.

5. Overcapitalized farming has doomed many to failure during the past thirty years. Farmers were victimized for three decades by the land boom which came to its climax under the stimulation of World War prices. Inflated prices of farm products caused many to buy land at excessive cost and to equip it with expensive machinery. Thus a heavy mortgage indebtedness was contracted and led to wide-spread bankruptcy when deflation ensued.

6. Tenant farming has been the pathway to destitution for a large number, especially in the South. Sharecroppers on the cot-

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

ton plantations are known as a class doomed to adversity by virtue of the system under which they live and labor, for the system at best denies them opportunities for bettering their lot. This had long been the case when, beginning in the early twenties, sharecroppers became the special victims of the failing cotton growing industry. Markets for this commodity shrunk and production was curtailed, causing large numbers to be forced off the land. In the Western Cotton Belt the use of tractors, four-row cultivators, and the cotton picker has helped dispossess the tenants. Having always depended upon landlords, and being wholly without resources otherwise, many have been left stranded and utterly destitute. The original Agricultural Adjustment Administration helped the landlords, but not the tenants. In fact, in the opinion of many students of the problem, it worsened their lot. Thus cotton tenancy appears to have produced a class of landless folk who, unless they can be rehabilitated, will remain permanent paupers.

7. Migratory seasonal labor has condemned another increasing class of countrymen to poverty. The rapid growth of large-scale commercialized farming in which workers are employed only in the harvest, has produced wanderers. They can secure work for only a brief season and only by shifting about. A considerable part of the year finds them idle and pennyless objects of relief.

8. The failure of rural industries, especially the exhaustion of timber, coal, and minerals in the Cut-Over and Appalachian-Ozark regions has been responsible for bringing another class to want. Formerly many small farmers on submarginal land in these areas supplemented agriculture by wage earning in local industries. Gradually timber and mineral resources have failed, industries have gone down, and the people have been left without adequate means of support.

9. Excessive reproduction is the major cause of family poverty in certain areas. This is the case in the Appalachian-Ozark highlands, sections of the Cotton Belt, and other scattered areas where the fecundity rate is way above the rural average. Here relief rolls have been the highest. W.P.A. research has found that women 20

to 45 years of age on relief in 300 counties have a fourth more children than the non-relief rural women of the same counties.⁸ In these poor land areas, as opportunities for the surplus population to migrate have decreased, congestion has followed, causing increased want and suffering.

Precipitate Factors pertain to conditions arising out of the industrial depression. These take several forms.

1. Unemployment for farm labor. The crisis which shrinking markets and falling prices brought to agriculture led to a greatly restricted demand for hired labor. Farmers who had formerly hired now utilized the labor of their own families. Thus many who had found regular employment in agriculture were left idle and soon forced to seek relief.

2. Unemployment of city and rural industrial workers on account of the depression added to the impoverished class of the country. Having been laid off, they turned to farming, frequently on the poorer land areas and on small farms of poor land in the vicinity of cities. But, lacking either capital or experience, they were destined to quick failure.

3. Lack of urban opportunities after 1929 caused rural youth who would have migrated to the cities to remain in the country. In the submarginal areas, least able to maintain them, they overcrowded agriculture. An extreme instance of this, due partially to the discontinuance of migration, occurred in four Appalachian mountain counties of West Virginia and Kentucky. Without any increase in acreage, the number of farms increased 32 per cent between 1930 and 1935, tho farm population grew by only 26 per cent. This caused the greatest congestion ever known in these counties and brought 31 per cent of the families onto relief rolls.⁹ In other regions they were the non-farm group without economic opportunity. They had no choice but to remain with their families and help sink them in destitution. The rural relief households in

⁸ Woofter and Winston, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁹ C. P. Loomis and L. S. Dodson, "Standard of Living in Four Appalachian Mountain Counties," *Social Research Report No. X*, U.S.D.A., Oct., 1938, p. 3.

October, 1935, contained 625,000 young people 16 to 24 years of age. All told, it is estimated that about 1,000,000 of them were recipients of some form of federal aid at that date.¹⁰

4. The stagnation of village business and industry caused by the general depression reduced many people to want. Farmers' villages suffering because of distressed agriculture failed to provide adequate sources of incomes for many. Industrial villages in rural areas saw their plants shut down and people deprived of customary means of livelihood. It is estimated that in the spring of 1935 one in every eight village families was dependent upon federal relief.¹¹ This included all classes, depression cases along with those whose misfortune was the result of cumulative factors.

Regional Aspects of Rural Poverty

In the discussion of causal factors in poverty it was incidentally brought out that some areas are worse off than others. Table 43, showing differential relief rates, indicates that the variation tends to be regional. This suggests that differential rates in various parts of the country are to be taken as symptomatic of differential social and economic conditions.

Nine distinct regions have been recognized. Six of them are looked upon as areas of chronic distress. They are the Lake States Cut-Over areas, the Appalachian-Ozark area, the Spring and Winter Wheat areas, and the Eastern and Western Cotton areas.¹² To these the Ranching region should be added as a seventh major area. Besides these are many minor areas where conditions are similar. Two regions, the Hay and Dairy areas, and the Corn Belt, represent areas of relative prosperity. A comparison of relief rates for June and October, 1935, in these several regions will reveal the contrasting conditions of the country.

¹⁰ Bruce L. Melvin, "Rural Youth on Relief," *WPA Research Monograph XI*, 1937, p. 1.

¹¹ Woofor and Winston, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113.

¹² See P. G. Beck and M. C. Forster, "Six Rural Problem Areas, Relief—Resources—Rehabilitation," *Research Monograph I*, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Division of Research Statistics, and Finance, 1935.

Table 43

INCIDENCE OF RURAL RELIEF BY AREAS IN A SAMPLE OF 138 COUNTIES AT VARIOUS DATES^a

Areas	All Rural Families 1930	RELIEF CASES PER 100 FAMILIES		
		October 1934	February 1935	October 1935
All areas	554,870	13.7	15.2	7.9
Eastern Cotton	136,610	11.3	8.5	3.3
Western Cotton	66,252	21.2	24.9	8.4
Appalachian-Ozark . .	86,654	18.5	19.8	19.7
Lake States Cut-Over .	12,044	32.1	38.9	26.3
Winter Wheat	12,112	16.4	16.8	7.0
Spring Wheat	14,756	32.4	33.5	14.2
Ranching	15,346	13.0	16.5	7.1
Corn Belt	97,201	8.7	12.0	3.2
Hay and Dairy	113,985	8.1	11.5	5.7

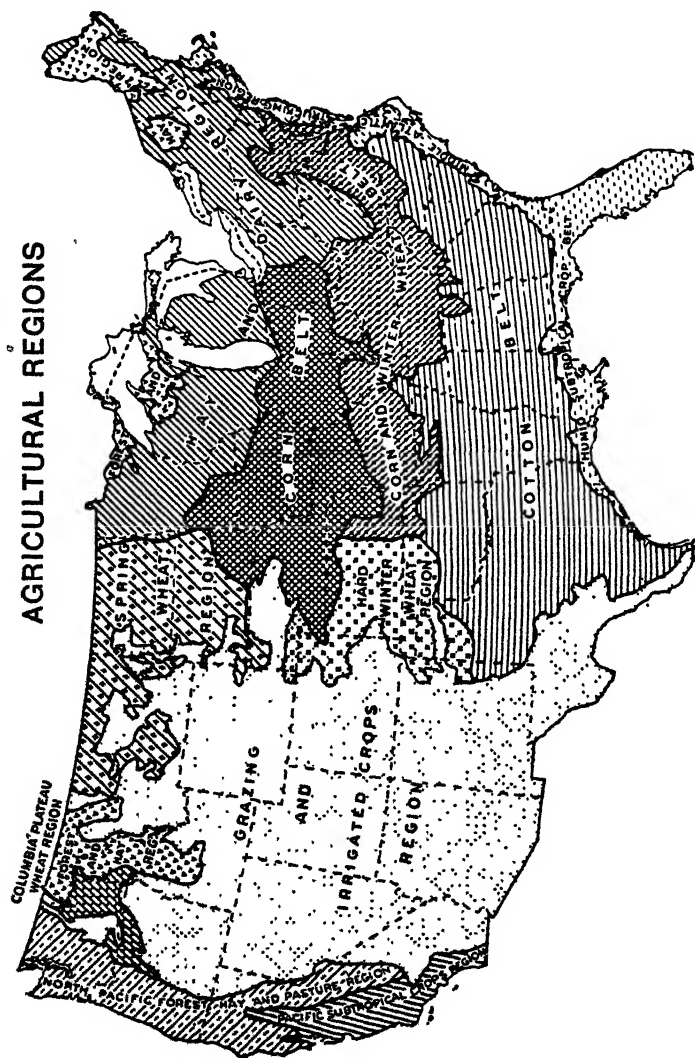
^a A. N. Mangus, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

It will be observed that the Appalachian-Ozark, the Lake States Cut-Over, and the Spring Wheat regions have been consistently the areas of highest relief. The Western Cotton was near the top, but improved in 1935. Their rates were far above the average. At the other extreme, the Corn Belt and the Hay and Dairy regions were far below the average. In the first six regions a disproportionate number of people have been on relief. Here, in fact, were found nearly half the rural families on relief, altho in 1930 the population of the areas was but 36 per cent of the total rural population. Moreover, they contained 43 per cent of the farmers, including about half the tenants and four-fifths of the sharecroppers.¹⁸

Altho under causes of poverty some reference was made to regional conditions, it will help to clarify the picture if a brief summary of the particular combination of factors operating in each region is presented.

One factor common to all the great problem areas is the presence of a large amount of poor land. Another factor common to most

¹⁸ Beck and Forster, *op. cit.*, p. 1.



57. Agricultural Regions

Source: C. C. Zimmerman and N. L. Whetten, "Rural Families on Relief," *WPA Research Monograph XVII*, 1938, p. 2.

of the regions is the reliance of a considerable portion of the families upon non-agricultural occupations. Of the recipients of relief, from 32 to 70 per cent of the heads of families belonged to this class.¹⁴

The Eastern Cotton Area embraces those parts of the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas devoted mainly to cotton growing. In this region is found much land abandoned because of soil erosion and the ravages of the boll weevil. Since the Civil War farm acreage has actually shrunk, while an excessive birth rate has brought increasing population pressure which heavy migration has not relieved.¹⁵ The sharecropper and tenant system, dominant since the Civil War, and cotton raising itself, are gradually breaking down, and the illiterate low-standard-of-living victims are unable either to adjust themselves to the change, or, in the absence of industrial opportunities in the area, to shift to new occupations.¹⁶ Such are the underlying conditions which have brought this region to a state of chronic suffering.

The Western Cotton Region is confined to those counties of Texas and Oklahoma where cotton is the main crop. The land is generally good, altho part of it lies in the drought section. Many farms are too small to be efficient. Large scale farms, which are common, are becoming mechanized, thus restricting the opportunities of labor or rendering it seasonal. Accompanying this development, crop control has cut down the acreage, and an excessive birth rate, coupled with much migration into the area, has contributed to the piling-up of a dispossessed and surplus tenant and laboring class. Social conditions are characterized by the same ignorance, meager and uncertain income, and low living standards as in the Eastern Cotton area.¹⁷

The Appalachian-Ozark Region lies largely in the mountainous parts of the Virginias, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas. It is a rough country of small farms of the self-sufficing and subsistence type. Much of the land is poor and

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Woofter and Winston, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124.

¹⁶ Beck and Forster, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

¹⁷ Woofter and Winston, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-127.

eroded, its cultivation not sufficing to provide a living. The population must therefore depend upon part-time employment in lumbering and mining. Finding these resources gradually failing, it now faces a precarious existence. Since the region has the highest rate of natural increase of any rural area, a crisis became inevitable with the slowing down of urbanward migration. Thus the pressure of the population upon the means of subsistence has steadily reduced it from bad to worse.¹⁸

The Lake States Cut-Over Region of northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota is an area of poor land with farms mostly uncleared. The growing season is too short for successful farming, and the timber and mining industries are decadent. For the majority, in fact, agriculture has never been more than a supplement to industrial employment. Altho state and private corporation schemes for colonization have induced settlers to attempt to live by farming, only under extraordinarily favorable conditions have any succeeded.¹⁹ To a growing, stranded population the depression added many back-to-the-land migrants, until the region became one of the chief problem areas.

The Winter Wheat Region is the southern part of the Western Great Plains, lying in southwest Kansas, southwest Nebraska, eastern Colorado, western Oklahoma, northeastern New Mexico, and northwestern Texas. It is an area of relatively low rainfall, of drought, and of dry land farming. Both water and wind erosion have played havoc since the pastoral economy was given up and the grassy plains were extensively broken for wheat raising. The rapid expansion in this direction began with the World War, and since then it has developed into the extremest form of commercialized and mechanized agriculture. When, on top of this, protracted drought came, the unprotected soil was blown away. Thus what was once grassy range became a Dust Bowl, causing many to abandon their farms and to migrate. At all times the region has

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 128-130; C. C. Taylor, H. N. Wheeler, and E. L. Kirkpatrick, "Disadvantaged Classes in American Agriculture," Farm Security Administration and Bureau of Agricultural Economics *Social Research Report No. VIII*, April, 1938, pp. 14-15; Beck and Forster, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-11.

¹⁹ Beck and Forster, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-15.

been subject to a five-year cycle of crop failure and crop successes, which gives it an unstable economy.²⁰

Altho not heavily populated, the short-sighted utilization of the land, together with heavy mortgages, has made it a problem area.

The Spring Wheat Region at the northern end of the plains embraces much of North and South Dakota, eastern Wyoming, and northeastern Montana and Nebraska. It is similar to the southern area in being prairie, dry, subject to recurring drought and adapted to ranching, but it has a thinner soil and is less suitable for arable agriculture. The same rapid breaking of the prairie for wheat growing as in the southern part has taken place, giving rise to like consequences.²¹

The two regions differ in that the northern area is cut up into more small holdings occupied by homesteaders. Many farms are too small to provide an adequate income under dry farming methods; hence overcropping has resulted.²² Thus crop production has become precarious, debt has piled up, and the region has become a problem area. Normally both the Winter and Spring Wheat regions are areas of high standards of living compared with the other four so far mentioned, but drought conditions in the Spring Wheat region put it among the highest on relief.

The Ranching Region of Montana, eastern Oregon, western Wyoming, and parts of Utah is a cattle and sheep-growing country with a low population density. It was severely affected by drought that depleted pasture, caused the loss of livestock, and brought the economy of the region to a critical pass. Thus the region became a relief area.

The Corn Belt in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri is the best agricultural area of America. It is relatively prosperous, and maintains a comparatively high standard of living. Family-sized farms are the rule. They normally yield an assured income. However, an excessively high tenancy rate and a heavy mortgage indebtedness incurred in the land boom period brought distress to many when the agricultural

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-20.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

²² Taylor, Wheeler, and Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

and industrial depressions came. This being the region of small towns depending upon agricultural support, a considerable non-farming population was affected by adverse agricultural conditions.

The Hay and Dairy Region, stretching from New York along the Great Lakes to Wisconsin and Minnesota, like the Corn Belt, is normally prosperous. Here family-sized farms prevail. Rural living standards are relatively high, and until the depression in agriculture, followed by that in industry, undermined markets, the farm population was financially secure. Relief rates have averaged the lowest of any major area.

Characteristics of Rural People on Relief

Much light has been thrown upon the problem of rural poverty by the studies which governmental agencies have made of relief clients.²³ A résumé of the findings of the latest sample study of conditions at the height of rural relief will reveal many more facts about the class of people aided.

1. The type and size of family on relief. Nearly five-sixths of the relief households were family groups of parents and children, normal or broken, with or without other members. The remaining sixth of the cases consisted of single persons and non-family groups. The open country had the greater part of the family groups, and villages the majority of one-person households on relief. About 90 per cent of all cases were legal families and about seven-tenths were parent-child groups. The latter were more numerous in the open country than in the villages. However, there were more households to which other than immediate members of the family were attached in the open country than in the villages.²⁴

Three things may be noted relative to the size of relief households. First, families of six or more constituted a larger proportion of relief cases than of the total population. Second, families of two to five persons on relief were proportionately fewer than in the total population, and third, single persons made up a larger per cent of those on relief than their percentage of the total popu-

²³ See Beck and Forster, *op. cit.*, *passim*; A. R. Mangus, *op. cit.*, Chaps. V-X.

²⁴ Mangus, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-58.

lation called for. At the same time the larger households have left the rolls more rapidly than the smaller ones, for they have had more employable persons.²⁵

2. Age and sex composition. The relief group was younger than the general population. It contained a higher per cent of children under 10 and 16 years than did the total rural population. Twenty-six per cent of all clients were under 10 years. The percentage of children was greater in the open country than in villages. All age groups from 16 to 65 were under-represented on the rolls in decreasing degree with increased age. From 65 up about the same proportion were on relief as in the whole population. About two-thirds of the relief households had children under 16, and 18 per cent had persons over 65 years. The fact of greatest significance is that relief families have an excessive number of children. Low income, excessive fecundity, poverty, and relief are closely related factors.

The sex distribution of relief clients was fairly balanced, but in certain age groups was wholly unbalanced. There was a disproportionate number of women in the 16-24 group, and a great excess of men in the group 65 and over. There was a much larger proportion of female heads of households in villages than in the open country. Among Negroes the ratio of female heads of households was especially high.²⁶

3. Marital state. A greater percentage of those 16-24 years of age on relief was married than the age group 16-24 represented of the total rural population. Marriage had also been at a younger age. That meant the percentage of single persons between 16 and 64 on relief was less than their percentage of the whole population. Proportionately more widowed women were on the rolls than in the total population. More young women than old and more old men than young were among the married on relief.²⁷

4. Educational status. The amount of schooling was found steadily to diminish from the younger to the older adults and household heads on relief and to average less than that of the non-relief rural population. In a sample of 47 counties the percentage

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 59-68.

²⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 69-78.

of heads of households without schooling was nearly three times as high among those on relief as among self-supporting households.²⁸ Over a fifth of the relief group 10-64 years had not reached the fourth grade, or had had no schooling whatever. Females were better schooled than males, and villagers than open country clients. There were marked regional differences, the southern counties showing only 20 to 30 per cent of the heads of households with as much as an eighth grade education, while the percentage ranged from two-fifths in the Lake States Cut-Over to two-thirds in the Ranching area.

In all age groups of children on relief normal school progress was lacking. For instance, about one-third of the 10-13 age group either had finished no grades at all or had attended less than four grades. Of the 14-15 age group only 37 per cent had finished the eighth grade, and only 9 per cent of the post-high school group, 18-20, had finished high school. Altho relief children under 16 were attending school in about the same proportions as other children of their age, those above 16 were out of school in relatively much greater numbers than were non-relief youth in the same age brackets. This was notably true of youth in the Eastern Cotton, the Appalachian-Ozark, and the Lake States Cut-Over regions.²⁹

5. Occupational status and employability. At the height of relief in 1935, three-fifths of the clients 16 to 64 belonged to the farm operator or farm labor class. Ten per cent of all recipients were usually engaged in manufacturing and mechanical industries, 5 per cent in mining, about 6 per cent in transportation and communication, 4 per cent in trade, and in public and professional service, and about 5 per cent in domestic and personal service.

For each person 16-64 on relief there were more than two dependents. However, in close to 90 per cent of the households there was at least one employable worker, and in about 85 per cent of the cases the worker was the head of the household. The unemployable households varied, according to the date studied, from 10 to 14 per cent of the total. They consisted chiefly of one person households, childless couples, and mothers with children.

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 80.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 81-89.

The rural employables on relief were largely youth and adults under 45, thirty-one per cent being under 25, and only 27 per cent above 44 years. Over a fifth were women, most of whom were young girls. However, a considerable percentage of those on the rolls were older women, both individuals and heads of households. In June, 1935, about three-tenths of all employables receiving relief were unskilled non-farm workers, with an additional 17 per cent of semiskilled, and skilled.³⁰

Table 44

USUAL OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYABLE HEADS^a OF RURAL RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS, FEBRUARY, AND JUNE, 1935^b

(138 counties representing 9 agricultural areas)

Usual Occupation	RURAL RELIEF CASES			
	Number		Per Cent	
	February	June	February	June
Total	71,340	48,112	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	44,651	24,976	62.6	51.9
Owners	10,995	6,418	15.4	13.3
Tenants ^c	17,432	9,684	24.4	20.2
Croppers	5,486	2,024	7.7	4.2
Laborers	10,738	6,850	15.1	14.2
Non-Agriculture	26,689	23,136	37.4	48.1

^a 16-64 years of age and working or seeking work.

^b Source: Asch and Mangus, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

^c Exclusive of croppers in the two cotton areas.

A majority of the employables in families on relief had some kind of work, since farmers operating their own farms were considered employed. However, farm laborers were in a different situation. Ninety-six per cent of all employed workers receiving relief in the open country were engaged in agriculture in February, 1935. Similarly, the largest group of employed villagers, 38 per cent, were so engaged.

In 1935 about half of all employable heads of households on relief were unemployed. Among farmers unemployment of house-

³⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 91-100.

hold heads ran from 6 per cent for owners, 14 per cent for tenants, 29 per cent for croppers, and 73 per cent for farm laborers. Among non-farmers 71 per cent of household heads were unemployed. For both farm owners and farm laborers unemployment was highest in the Western states. In the South it was lowest for owners and next to the highest for laborers. Villagers were employed far less than the farm population.³¹

6. Mobility. Nearly three-fourths of those on relief in 1935 were residents of long standing in the counties surveyed. The rest were migrants of the preceding ten years. Among them were many whose mobility had arisen from protracted unemployment or drought, some whose moving was to seek cheaper living or the aid of relatives, and others who had come in search of secure relief status. Migrants were fewest in the South and most numerous in the Pacific Coast states, where they constituted from 54 to 59 per cent of all recipients of aid. Oregon was the extreme case of out-of-state migrants, since over one-fifth had entered the state subsequent to 1929. The largest per cent of migratory clients in all states had moved within the boundaries of the state where they were residents. Non-farm and farm laborers were the main class of migrants on rural relief. They had gravitated to country villages and to the land in quest of work or some other means of livelihood. They fared the worst of all classes insofar as employment was concerned.³²

Relief and Rehabilitation

The present and future welfare of the unemployed, dispossessed, sorely impoverished, wholly dependent, and destitute classes of rural America constitutes a part of the greatest problem the nation has to face. It is a problem that is passing from an emergency stage to one requiring a permanent policy of reconstruction and prevention. We shall first note the emergency measures taken by the government to meet the destitution precipitated by the industrial depression.

³¹ Mangus, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-110.

³² *Op. cit.*, pp. 111-119.

Emergency Relief

To prevent actual want was the first requisite of the situation. When in the face of unprecedented need local agencies and resources failed, the National Government came to the rescue. In July, 1932, Congress authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to lend \$300,000,000 of federal money to states and localities to finance relief. The Federal Emergency Relief Act followed in May, 1933, authorizing the President to set up an agency to administer relief, furnish work, and relieve distress due to unemployment. Thus the Federal Emergency Administration came into existence, with one department organized for rural rehabilitation. Farmers in need because dispossessed thru mortgage foreclosures or otherwise were classified as unemployed and hence were eligible for aid.

1. Direct Relief. At the outstart the emergency program was concerned with administering direct relief. On that private, local, state, and federal effort was focused. It was the chief method from 1933 to 1936. About two-thirds of the public expenditure during this period was in the form of direct aid.

2. Work Relief. Meantime, work relief projects had been initiated by local and state enterprise. These came under control of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration until the government itself set up a work relief program as a partial substitute for direct relief. The Civilian Conservation Corps, created in April, 1933, was the first work agency sponsored by the federal government. The erection of the Civil Works Administration in November, 1933, was the second designed to speed the employment, at regular wages, of needy workers. In April, 1934, the Emergency Work Relief Program of the F.E.R.A. was substituted for the C.W.A.

Thus wage assistance to men privately employed on public works was terminated and government projects were organized on a straight relief basis. In April, 1935, the third work relief program, the P.W.A., was authorized by Congress to coördinate and admin-

ister all employment and work projects. This act required 90 per cent of the workers on public works to be drawn from relief rolls. Thus after 1935 direct relief was turned back to the states. It grew less as employable clients were shifted to P.W.A. Security wages were largely substituted for charity. They represented a new form of public assistance, quite different from the usual methods of outdoor relief.

3. Subsistence Homestead Relief. In 1933 the Subsistence Homestead Division of the Department of the Interior began locating distressed families in industrial employment on small parcels of land near industrial towns or in established industrial areas. The object of these projects was to enable wage-earners to raise part of their own food. Non-farm rural workers were assisted under this scheme.

Altho the rural population shared in all these relief measures, special federal programs were designed for the benefit of farmers.

4. Farm Relief.

a. The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation was created in the fall of 1933 for the purpose of purchasing and distributing among the states foodstuff and feed for livestock. It was not exclusively a relief agency, nor especially rural, altho it assisted the F.E.R.A. in rural relief. In 1935 it became the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation of the Department of Agriculture.

b. Drought Relief. Farmers of the drought-stricken West began calling for aid early in 1933. The F.E.R.A. responded with direct relief to families and with feed for farm animals until a special drought relief program could be arranged with the co-operation of the Emergency Conservation Work, the Extension Service, the Drought Relief Service of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the Farm Credit Administration, the Farm Debt Adjustment Service, and the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation.³⁸

c. Rural Rehabilitation. In the Southern States the F.E.R.A. began to advance capital goods to farmers on relief who were

³⁸ Asch and Mangus, "Farmers on Relief and Rehabilitation," *Research Monograph VIII*, WPA, 1937, p. 15.

likely to recover their independence by such aid. In 1934 this gave rise to the Rural Rehabilitation Division for the purpose of helping farm and other rural families to self-support. There were five types of assistance it was authorized to render: (1) supply commodities until families could produce their own foodstuff; (2) furnish seed, fertilizer, and farm equipment; (3) provide feed and livestock; (4) advance funds to pay debts; and (5) give medical care and other needed aid. Each state controlled its own program.

There was wide latitude and variation in the type of help given. It ranged all the way from furnishing capital goods, purchasing land, transferring people from poor to good land, adjusting debts, to training in farm and home management. Those aided were permitted to repay the loans in cash, kind, or P.W.A. work. At first the program was confined to the Southern States, where so many sharecroppers and tenants were in extreme need, but by 1935 it had become widely extended, especially thruout the drought-stricken West. In all cases its services were limited to families who appeared likely to regain self-support. Up to June, 1935, a total of 398,000 clients had been aided. At that time the rehabilitation program was removed from state control and placed under the Resettlement Administration and finally taken over by the Farm Security Administration. By January, 1939, over 670,000 families had been aided and over \$62,000,000 in loans had been returned to the Federal Treasury.

d. Credit Relief. Emergency refinancing of farm mortgages by the government was a relief measure during 1933-35. In 1933 the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act made available to the Land Bank Commissioner \$200,000,000 to meet the credit needs of farmers threatened with foreclosures. In 1934 the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation was created to take over the work. Other legislation culminating in the Farm Credit Act of 1937, creating the Farm Credit Administration, has greatly expanded the credit facilities of farmers by authorizing coöperative farm loan associations and productive credit associations. Thus group borrowing on long-term mortgages or on short-term notes has come into force as a means of easing the situation for many.

e. Rural Resettlement. This mode of relief, initiated by the Division of Subsistence Homesteads and by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, was transferred in July, 1935, to the Resettlement Administration and finally to the Farm Security Administration. Resettlement work has consisted in taking families from poor land areas and reestablishing them on good land. By January, 1939, 146 farm and part-time farm projects had been developed. However, only 11,800 families, or 55,000 persons, were involved; hence the achievement was relatively unimportant, since it is estimated that 650,000 families are living on land too poor to support them.

The cost to private and public agencies for rural relief since 1931 probably aggregates close to four billion dollars. Most of that vast outlay has been for emergency purposes, not to purchase security or prevent poverty. How, indeed, this last may be done, no one can say, for man has no solution for the age-old problem of the poor. Still, there are measures that may mitigate conditions. Brief attention will be given them.

Reconstruction and Prevention

1. Assistance for special classes has been provided for by the Social Security Act of 1935. These classes include the aged, the blind, dependent children, and injured industrial workers. Altho the act leaves out farm workers, it applies generally to the other rural classes.

2. Conservation Measures. The Agricultural Adjustment Act, of 1933, was designed to balance agricultural production and to restore prices of farm products. In a measure it did this, and to the extent it tended to introduce a new economic system for agriculture, it was constructive. The Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, which superseded it in 1936, was ostensibly aimed at soil conservation instead of production control, but in operation it has served both purposes. The next A.A.A. of 1938 carried forward this policy with a view to aiding the small farmers. These programs have looked toward greater economic security for the

farmers. However, crop control has not been organized to favor small producers as against large-scale commercial farmers to the degree it should be, if it is to help the low-income classes.

3. Planned land-utilization is receiving some attention in the government program of reconstruction. It has great possibilities as a means of rescuing millions of people from the submarginal areas where they are doomed to poverty. Any adequate planning would have to determine not only how the land should be used, but, if cultivated, the size of a farm under scientific management needed to support a family in the various localities. In other words, the problem involves saving a lot of people from the folly of trying to make a living from an insufficient acreage.

A program of this nature goes beyond mere soil conservation, requiring regional reorganization of land use, and extensive population redistribution and reëducation. Obviously, change on such a scale is too much at variance with our traditional ways to be brought about quickly or easily, if at all.

4. Change in the tenancy system is another item in the program. The President's Committee on Farm Tenancy, reporting in 1937, squarely faced this problem and made important recommendations both for the improvement of landlord-tenant relations and for helping renters to become owners. The legislation recommended for the benefit of the first class called for (1) improved written lease contracts, specifying the basis of sharing various crops, (2) a new method of taxing farm lands so as to promote ownership, and (3) provisions for safeguarding the liberties of tenants on the land. For the promotion of ownership it recommended that a Farm Security Administration be set up in the Department of Agriculture to purchase and resell land to promising tenants. Purchasers were to be given a five-year trial with 20 to 40 years to complete the payments. In case of failure the land would return to the government corporation. These became law and the Farm Security Administration is now an effectively functioning agency. Thus a movement is under way that may raise the economic level of a large class of tenants.

5. Expansion of coöperation also was proposed by the President's

Committee as another method of economic improvement. Coöperation has only a limited development in America. Altho a third of the nation's farmers are members of coöperative marketing and purchasing associations, such organizations do not go far enough to secure for their members all the profits of agriculture. If their scope were widened to include every step in the productive process, as it does in Denmark, the farmers' gains would be much greater than they are. The small farmers of that country have prospered, and there is every reason to believe the small farmers of America would derive great benefit from following the Danish example.

Small-scale commercial farming appears to be inefficient in comparison with that of large-scale enterprises able to make effective use of machinery and expert management.³⁴ Possibly large-scale coöperative farming can be substituted for small, independent operation with marked gain for the participants. Except for the sharing of the gains, such coöperative enterprises are approximated economically in the southern plantations. Recently a large coöperative farm has been established by private enterprise in the Mississippi Delta.³⁵ The Farm Security Administration is now projecting such farms. For example, it established near La Force, Missouri, in 1938 a coöperative cotton plantation of 6,700 acres for 100 share-cropper families. Thus the extension of the coöperative principle is under way and may prove to be a boon to many.

6. Reducing population would seem to be one method of permanent relief among the lower rural classes. If our expanding economy has come to an end, the cities are not going to continue to absorb a large surplus rural population. The rate of increase must be lowered, or the economic state of the over-fecund will be worsened. Whatever else may be done to help them escape poverty, limiting reproduction would seem to be necessary.

Such are some of the remedies which, if carried out, will do something to forestall rural poverty, but all taken together they will not wholly eliminate it. For certain conditions, such as the

³⁴ William G. Roylance, "How Big Should the Farm Be?" *The New Republic*, Nov. 22, 1939, pp. 137-139.

³⁵ Woofter and Winston, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

decadence of rural industries, there seems to be no remedy. For the success of these programs careful planning and wise administration over a relatively long period of time will be required. In fact, hardly anything short of a complete organization of all the constructive forces of the nation will be able to solve the problem.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Debate the question: Distributive justice is the basic principle on which a program of rural rehabilitation should be based.
2. What should be the general nature of a long-term program of rural rehabilitation?
3. Is America nearer such a program today than in 1932? If so, in what ways?
4. Are the New Deal favors farmers have received likely to make them as great legislative lobbyists for subsidies as were the industrialists under the protective tariff system?
5. Can an effective program for the elimination of rural poverty be carried thru democratically or must there be much compulsion?
6. Is wide-spread rural poverty with independence to be preferred to reasonable security with loss of independence, or not?
7. Which of the suggested remedies for the relief and prevention of poverty is most feasible for your community?

Part V

**RURAL INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL
PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR**

THE TRADITIONAL ELEMENT

Our Social Heritage and Its Importance

IT WILL be well at the outstart to get clearly before us just what is meant by social tradition. Incidentally, it should be noted that there are several terms used to designate this element. In addition to "tradition" it is common to speak of the "social heritage," the "social heredity," "record," "record of the past" and "culture." What these terms stand for, may well be stated in the language of Taylor, who defined culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."¹ Thoughtways, folkways and mores are all involved in the social heritage.

Agrarian Culture

The rural and the urban people of America possess much in common as regards the social heritage. They have in general much the same religion, politics, ethics, marriage customs, manner of association, and mode of life. They naturally are sharers in the same civilization. Nevertheless, the patterns of behavior of the two groups diverge at many points. Each has ways and standards peculiar to itself. There are, in fact, an urban culture and a rural culture. There are thoughtways, folkways, and mores of the farm which give to rural society a character all its own. For instance, one conspicuous characteristic is primary association. In addition, there are many others which need to be carefully distinguished if rural society is to be adequately understood.

¹ E. B. Taylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I, p. 1.

It is sometimes said that urban civilization is full grown, while the rural is undeveloped. Still, the body of tradition identified with country life is quite as old as that found in the city. The beginnings of trade and certain manual arts may date from a time before any agriculture existed. "Working in flint," says T. N. Carver, "has been called the oldest trade in the world, but tilling the soil has first claim to that distinction, unless the word 'trade' is to be applied to special mechanical occupations only."² Certainly the bulk of the practices connected with commerce and manufacturing, upon which modern urban groups depend, are not ancient. They are but of yesterday compared with the age-old pursuit of husbandry, for upon the latter all the civilizations of antiquity were founded. In Chaldea, Egypt, and China agriculture was flourishing when history dawned some three to four thousand years B. C. In India it was an important pursuit when the code of Manu was formed—as early as the Ninth Century B. C. In Persia it held supreme place when the Zendavestas were written—not less than seven or eight centuries before Christ. And likewise in Greece, civilization was agricultural in the times of Hesiod—probably eight hundred B. C. Hence, it may be said that the culture of the country is hoary with antiquity and ripe with maturity beside that of the city.

Indeed, the roots of all true civilization are deep in agriculture. As M. L. Bordeau has said: "The moment when man sought the chief support of his life in agriculture is one of the most important dates of history, and opened the decisive era of civilization. Till then, hunter or fisherman, he lived chiefly upon his catches, free or domesticated, and, superior to carnivorous species, he differed from them only in having a more intelligent method of hunting. When he became an agriculturist he rose above all the animals by a manner of living without analogy among them. He made the land his domain, cut down the forests, plowed the ground, and propagated by industry the plants useful for his wants. From that time he had at his disposal incomparably vaster resources than he could draw from animals. His comfort, henceforth assured, depended on himself only, and populations increased rapidly. Under

² T. N. Carver, *Principles of Rural Economics*, p. 26.

the influence of these new conditions, all the elements of civilization were developed and advanced. Varied industries were constituted to give value to the productions of the earth, habits were regulated, and milder religions substituted for the bloody sacrifices of the pastoral phase peaceful offerings of wheat, meal, oil and wine.”³

Among the chief elements of civilization developed by agriculture was the idea of property in land. Primitive hunters and nomadic herders had arrived at the notion of private property, but not that of landed possession. At most they had a communal concept of land ownership, but the cultivation of plants gave new significance to particular portions of the tribal domain. The portions that were arable were parceled out to the several families composing the clan. The cultivation itself of a definite area, even tho the same area might not be allotted indefinitely, together with the enjoyment of the usufruct thereof, naturally created a deep sense of proprietorship in the soil. Out of this eventually grew private landholding.

Naturally, agriculture caused the development of new tools and implements and their evolution from digging sticks to plows and finally to modern machines. Hence it may be truthfully said that agriculture gave the initial stimulus to mechanical invention and modern civilization.

Presumably too the rise of this art gave the first impetus to the building of permanent habitations. For when agriculture became the chief source of food supply, the group soon became permanently settled and the shelters of the soil-tillers changed from temporary tepees to fixed abodes.

Thus civilization and agriculture are substantially identical in time of appearance and in essential nature. Savagery linked with hunting and fishing and barbarism with herding have nowhere yielded that social permanency and development which mark the civilized stage. Only agriculture has done this. In no case does this hold more true than with respect to Aryan civilization. The very name itself, accord-

³ M. L. Bordeau, "The Beginnings of Agriculture," *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. 46, pp. 684-685.

ing to Max Müller, means *arare*, to plow—signifying that the culture of the Aryans was at bottom agriculture.

Civilization Agricultural at Bottom

How man began to cultivate plants and to build the agrarian tradition that was to give the world civilization, is largely a matter of speculation. However, glimpses of what may well have been the modes of beginning have been caught here and there. Among the West Australians it was customary in digging wild yams to reinsert the tops so that they might grow again. This step toward cultivation, says H. L. Roth, is the earliest of which there is knowledge.⁴ But there was a still earlier step, the origin of which has not been observed, namely, making the discovery "that the yams' heads alone would suffice for propagation."⁵

It has been suggested that the first step toward the cultivation of grains was the incidental scattering of seeds along the track to the camp when the seeds of wild grasses were gathered and borne thither for food.⁶ This would suggest voluntary sowing and perhaps some preparation of the ground to receive the seed. The crudest kind of sowing known has been observed among certain tribes of Bengal, where the seed is simply thrown into the ground to come up as it can.⁷ Between this method and real tillage by digging up the ground, such as several American Indian tribes practiced, many intermediate stages have been observed.⁸

Everything points to the first appearance of full-blown agriculture in one of two sections of the globe. The region embracing the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile is one, and the other is that portion which claims the Ganges and the Yang-Tse-Kiang.⁹ Possibly in one of these areas some 10,000 years B. C. the art was developed and from thence spread to other parts of the world. However, it may have had an independent origin in many separated

⁴ H. L. Roth, *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, April, 1886, p. 120.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ M. L. Bordeau, *op. cit.*, p. 686.

areas. It seems, at any event, to have reached Italy by 8,000 or 9,000 B. C. During the Bronze Age it was well under way. That period marks the beginning of peasant life. The Swiss Lake-dwellers were cultivators of wheat and barley. One variety of their wheat has been traced by way of Egypt to the Fertile Crescent of Asia, between the Persian Gulf and the Tigrus, where this grain appears to have originated.

The art of agriculture as we know it is a body of tradition enriched by many streams from many plains, plateaus, and valleys flowing together. Soil-tillers have all borrowed freely from one another. We read of the Egyptian Pharaohs and the rulers of China sending forth expeditions to discover plants and other means of improving cultivation.¹⁰ And we know how this tradition was enhanced for many peoples by folk wanderings. The Aryan cultural groups, for instance, as they were dispersed thruout Europe and Asia, scattered the knowledge of the art as they had gathered it in their migrations. The conquering peoples also did their share. Thus, the Romans took pains to make the agriculture of every part of the world over which they ruled yield something to benefit every other part.¹¹

So little by little, by various means and from many sources, this body of tradition has been built. Consciously and unconsciously, many nations have collaborated to produce it. The ripened experiences of unnumbered generations have been gathered into it. And those who now possess it have come into a goodly heritage indeed—perhaps the richest and noblest portion of all that which falls to the lot of man.

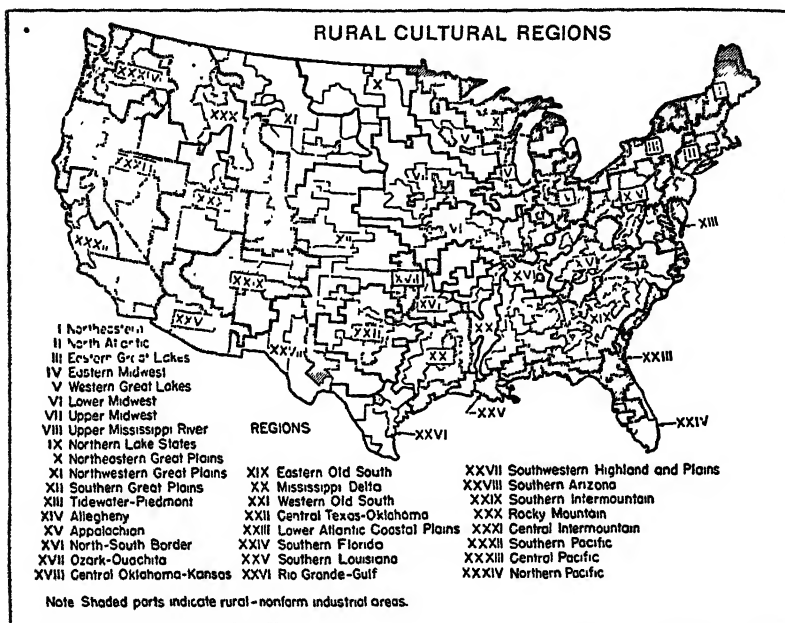
Cultural Areas

Altho a common agricultural heritage will be found generally thruout the western world, rural cultural diversity also is present. Even within the confines of the United States such diversity has long been recognized. However, it has been only of late that efforts have been made to delimitate regions or areas on the basis of cul-

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 687.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 688.

tural differences.¹² Such areas are defined as regions "in which natural and demographic factors and historical circumstances have contributed to the development of a homogeneous economic and social structure."¹³



58. Rural Cultural Regions

Source: A. R. Mangus, "Regional Aspects of Contemporary Culture," *American Sociological Review*, August, 1939, p. 514.

Differential relief rates in various parts of the country aroused interest in the subject of rural socio-cultural regions, since the rates

¹² See W. T. Couch (Ed.), *Culture in the South*, University of North Carolina Press, 1934; H. W. Odum, *Southern Regions*, University of North Carolina Press, 1936; W. F. Ogburn, "Regions," *Social Forces*, Oct., 1936; H. W. Odum and H. E. Moore, *American Regionalism*, Henry Holt, 1938; and J. O. Hertzler, "Some Sociological Aspects of Regionalism," *Social Forces*, Oct., 1939.

¹³ C. E. Lively and R. B. Almack, "A Method of Determining Rural Social Sub-Areas with Applications to Ohio," Ohio State University Department of Rural Economics, *Mimeographed Bulletin No. 106*, Jan., 1938, p. 1.

appeared to investigators to be symptomatic of differential socio-cultural and economic conditions. The result was the definition of six rural problem areas by the research division of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.¹⁴ Subsequent research by the Works Progress Administration led to the identification of thirty-four rural cultural areas.¹⁵

The method of determining areas was originally devised by Lively and Almack.¹⁶ The first step involved the selection of factors to be used as cultural indices for the discovery of socially homogeneous regions. Eighty-three factors were selected, which were found to be highly correlated with three basic variables, viz.: (1) a gross farm income index; (2) rural plane of living index; and (3) rural population fertility ratio. With the cultural index thus devised, the next step was to apply it to Ohio counties and tentative areas until by a process of analysis and synthesis the actual cultural regions could be defined.

A similar factor analysis was applied by Mangus to other sections of the country with the result that eleven variables were selected for delimiting rural regions and subregions. In addition to the three basic ones originally used, eight others were employed. They were (4) "the percentage of farm tenantry in 1935; (5) land value per capita of the rural-farm population; (6) the percentage of farm produce consumed on the farms; (7) the percentage of Negroes in the South; (8) the percentage of 'other races' in the Southwest; (9) the percentage of farm wage workers in the West; (10) illiteracy rates; and (11) physiographic features in places where these were prominent elements."¹⁷

Obviously, as the author recognized, not all these variables were cultural;¹⁸ hence there may be some doubt about the areas being strictly cultural. However, they are approximately such. Figure 58 shows the farm and non-farm areas combined. Altho recognizing that rural society is always changing, those responsible for mapping

¹⁴ P. G. Beck and M. C. Forster, "Six Problem Areas," Federal Emergency Relief Administration, *Research Mimeograph I*, 1935.

¹⁵ A. R. Mangus, "Regional Aspects of Contemporary Culture," *American Sociological Review*, August, 1939, pp. 506-515.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*

¹⁷ Mangus, *op. cit.*, p. 509.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

the areas believe them to represent fairly permanent cultural differentiations.¹⁹

Apart from being useful for research and rural planning, they may serve as a basis for a complete description of the pattern diversities of rural culture. The writing of sociology is a future task of sociology.

Agriculture the Basis of Urban Culture

Indissolubly linked with the beginnings of civilization and antedating commerce and industry, the agrarian culture gave a basis for urban pursuits and led to the development of cities. There could scarcely have been any considerable cities without a fairly well-developed agriculture yielding a food surplus sufficient to sustain a non-food-producing population. As a matter of fact, the study of city origins has made it clear that they commonly came into existence thru a process of robbery directed against soil-tillers. The initiators of this process were predacious and warlike pastoral tribesmen who found it easy to prey upon and plunder the less mobile and more peaceable agriculturists with whom they came in contact.²⁰ This finally led to outright conquest and subjugation. The rule which was then set up to facilitate the exploitation of the conquered was the genesis of the state, and the armed camps in which the pastors had settled themselves on the territory of the conquered became the nuclei of the first important urban centers of the world. Power and authority were concentrated in these places. To them was brought the tribute that the soil-tillers had to render their masters. Here were reared the altars of the gods which the conquerors required to be worshipped. In due time came various traders and craftsmen, and in one way and another a numerous population was gathered. Thus what were originally the camps of invading warriors became the permanent abodes of urban groups. After this manner generally thruout the world, especially wherever territorial states were established, cities arose and developed. Doubtless, some cities arose in other ways at river fords,

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 515.

²⁰ Oppenheimer, Franz, *The State*.

about shrines and sacred spots, at places where wares were exchanged, and in strategic localities by the sea where robber bands were wont to gather, but the primary source of cities seems to have been that described above. If therefore cities commonly originated after the manner indicated, it is to be observed that historically urban culture has been parasitic upon agriculture.

Urban Attitude and Superiority

From the situation just described there was received into the general tradition a certain mental attitude that still persists. The attitude of these ancient state makers and city founders toward agriculturists was one of scorn and contempt. History abounds in its expression. Thus, the code of Manu, largely the product of a pastoral economy, gives no honor to this art. Nor yet do the Zendavestas view it altogether favorably. And whenever in all ages there have been herdsmen, they have invariably preyed on the "soil grubbers" and "wheat eaters." The greater freedom of the pastoral life naturally led its followers to look upon the sedentary pursuit of husbandry as degrading. This notion was greatly strengthened, no doubt, because the soil-tillers were so easily despoiled and reduced to vassalage. And when these were actually brought to that condition by the conquering pastors, the attitude became a fixed one. Transferred to the cities, as they arose, and wrought into every phase of their organization and thought, this attitude has come down thru the centuries and dominates the social tradition to this day.

Unfortunately, the soil-tillers have almost always accepted this low estimation of themselves and their art. Serfs, peasants, farmers alike have deprecated their occupation. The influence of the immemorial past is still felt.

In France, for instance, agriculture is the most despised of occupations. The peasants are despised by the politicians and the wealthy classes. The latter have no interest in country life save for purposes of pleasure.²¹ "And the French farmers despise them-

²¹ E. C. Branson, *Farm Life Abroad*, p. 273.

selves. They suffer from . . . an inferiority complex. The evidence lies in their sullen mien and humor that demands and receives punctilious courtesy in the market places and the army service alike." ²²

Exceptions to this conception of themselves and their occupation among farmers are found chiefly where they have become the dominant element in the state. Perhaps the most notable case in point is found in present day Denmark. There one finds a worthy pride.

The American farmer has generally thought meanly of his calling when making comparisons with other vocations. The urban viewpoint that the countryman is a "rustic," a "clodhopper," a "hayseed," a "hodge," still persuades him. The modern city, despite the fact that it professes to have turned from exploitative to benevolent urbanism, seems to have produced no modification of this attitude either for the city dweller or for the countryman.

In our Southern states, where large cities have not existed and where urban life of any sort has played but a small part, the word "farmer" carries no idea of inferiority. The "country gentleman" is still the aristocrat of the South. Thus it was in the days of slavery and the old plantation, and so it still remains. The planter was to the South what the landed nobility of England was to English society—the ruling class, to the manner born. Everywhere else in America, however, the farmer has been of inferior status similar to that of the peasantry of Europe.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Apart from occupational and material patterns, wherein does American agrarian culture differ from urban industrial culture?
2. What have been the chief agrarian cultural developments of the last half century?
3. Urban culture is being constantly enriched by the work of research laboratories and planned invention. Has agriculture any comparable facilities for enriching its culture?
4. Is there greater or less diversity in urban America than in rural culture? Defend your position.
5. Do the cities of the world differ in their culture more or less than the agricultural areas?
6. Argue the question pro and con that the American farmers as a class are losing their sense of inferiority to the town and city dwellers.
7. How far can the relatively static nature of agrarian as compared with urban culture be attributed to the loss of plasticity because of its antiquity?
8. Are there any valid grounds for the contention of some that urban culture is decadent while agrarian culture is eternally germinal and originaive?

SOME GENERAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTITUDES OF THE COUNTRY PEOPLE

SOCIOLOGISTS recognize a type of mind that is distinctively rural, unlike either the town or city mind in several respects. It is perhaps more strikingly manifest in America than in Europe. At least it is a highly significant type in our nation.

When we speak of the mind of the countryman, we refer particularly to the psychology of the farmer, for it is he who gives tone to rural society as a whole. His mind is the typical mind of the rural group. The non-agricultural elements in the rural population differ somewhat in their mental attitudes from the tillers of the soil, and yet these elements are in the main variants about a general psychic mode represented by the farmer.

Again, let it be noted that when we speak of the mind of the countryman, we must think of average traits and attitudes. We must regard the country people as a class, and remember that a class implies deviation about a norm. Despite variation enough uniformity prevails to permit certain generalizations about the type. Thus we are to study those mental traits that are peculiar to American farmers as a class, and note wherein the rural differs from the urban mind.

Meaning of Rural Mind

The rural mind may be considered in its purely individual, its social, and its "societal" aspects. When considered in its individual aspects, the personal behavior of the individual alone is the object of interest. When viewed in its social aspects, the reactions of in-

dividuals to their fellows, or what has been called "co-individual" behavior, are studied. When approached in its "societal" aspects, attention is focused upon "pluralistic" behavior, or the habitual ways of group conduct known as group ways, class ways, folk ways, and institutions.¹ In such a study we are led into three fields. The first is that of the psychologist proper, the second that of the social psychologist, and the third that of the sociologist. In the very nature of the case these three fields are not so separate and distinct as the act of defining them tends to suggest. After all, they are only three aspects of the total behavior of the individual, for the mind of the individual is conditioned by co-individual and multiple-individual reactions and these in turn complicate each other. This is only to say that the individual mind operates in a social medium, and that a purely individual psychology is no longer looked upon as valid. Instead, the individual is understandable only in social relations; and individual psychology and social psychology have come to be one. Therefore in studying the rural mind we shall be concerned specifically with the first two fields viewed as one, for the third, or pluralistic behavior, is covered in those parts of this work dealing with the social heritage and with social organization.

The individual and social type of mind of countrymen as distinguished from that of citymen does not imply any hereditary differences. Nor does it imply any difference in psychic mechanism. Obviously, the human mind is everywhere constituted in quite the same way. Its methods and processes are universal. Hence rural and urban people alike have the same inborn behavior mechanism, if human beings have any inborn mechanism at all. Otherwise stated, the genesis and conditioning of psychic life takes place after the same manner with all men. The only difference, then, between the rural and urban mind is that which arises by virtue of different conditioning factors in a different physical and social environment. In the last analysis it turns out to be a matter of divergent habit reactions, attitudes and judgments due to the dissimilar environmental conditions of country and city.

¹ F. H. Giddings, *Scientific Study of Human Society*, pp. 13, 50-51.

Factors in the Genesis of the Rural Mind

In tracing the growth of the individual in the rural environment from childhood up, the factors influencing him may become apparent.

1. The starting point is of course with the child in the home. His world for the first three or four years, whether in country or city, is the primary group of parents and brothers and sisters. For the average child the country home is, on the whole, widely different from the city home. There is an isolated setting for the farm, with other homes and other people generally far removed. The seclusion that the isolated house brings in the open country and in lesser degree even in the village and small town, where houses are detached, each on a plot of ground by itself, is a factor not to be ignored. The significance of this is that the home influence of the country is more intense, exclusive, and supreme than that exerted by the city home, crowded among other homes and beset with other people. Except for the few, home under urban conditions does not mean seclusion, exclusiveness, apartness and complete privacy. It means intrusion, sharing, crowding and too much publicity.

Again, there is an amplitude of meaning in the idea of home for the country child that is foreign to the urban child. To the former it is much more than house and family; it includes, besides, the barn, the yard, the garden, the fields with their plants, trees, animals and numerous other things, the work going on about the farm, and a wealth of loved spots within the confines of the family holdings. The city child lives in surroundings of quite another nature; a home world altogether narrower and less varied. Human, artificial, mechanical and commercial elements play upon the child of the city, while upon the child of the country there is somewhat less of the human and more of the natural and living, the unrestrained and free out-of-doors at work to give bent to the mind.

2. Around the home lies the neighborhood, which is another primary group of great influence in the making of the mind. For the rural child this is a predetermined group. He finds it at hand and enters into it as he grows up. He comes to know everybody

and to be known by all. Here he finds intimate face to face relations with all other children and grown-ups. Here spontaneous accommodations take place and easy identifications of self with the group are made. It is a situation where no one is capable of a thought or emotion strange to the others; where "the temper, the mood, the outlook, of the individual" and the group are the same. All aspects of the personality are touched by this group and undivided loyalty is demanded and given. How different the city neighborhood and the child's experience in it! Perhaps the contacts are easier and more quickly made with the group in the city, for it thrusts itself upon the individual in an inescapable way, but there is not the intimacy and complete identification of the individual with the city's heterogeneous neighborhood that there is of the individual with the homogeneous neighborhood of the country. Moreover, relations with the many in the city are largely impersonal. The group life in which the urban neighborhood abounds is far more of the interest or strictly associational type than is found in the country. That of the country may be said to be communal in that people feel themselves members one of another in a degree that is not ordinarily possible for the city neighborhood as a whole.

The play group is always an important feature of the neighborhood. This is everywhere a relationship of choice, but in the country it is much more under the direct surveillance of the home than in the city. It is true, as Jane Addams said, that "never before have the pleasures of the young and mature become so definitely separated as in the modern city."² Along with this separation of play from the home and family goes a much greater degree of organization and commercialization in the city. The country child's play is home-made, spontaneous and generally undirected. If a boy's gang be taken for illustration, one notes that the scenes of its operations and exploits will be very different in the two spheres. In the country is great liberty and range of action. A wide world invites to many things—to hunt, to fish, to swim, to skate, to roam the woods and fields without fear or favor. On the city streets the gang moves in a sphere limited to men and things made by men.

² Jane Addams, *The Spirit of Youth in the City Streets*, p. 13.

Restriction, circumspection and regulation are on every hand to thwart the spirit of youth. The boy on the street, "standing around on the corner" with the gang to which he mysteriously attaches himself, finds "the difficulties of direct untrammelled action almost as great there" as they are in the factory.³

A second group in the community is the school. If it is the country community, the school will generally be a single-room institution in the local neighborhood. In some cases it will be a consolidated school serving a wider area. The country school is likewise a primary group, small and homogeneous. The city school lacks a great deal of this primariness, for generally there is little homogeneity and an absence of that thoro acquaintance among the children that one finds in the country. The school is unquestionably a larger and more effective influence in the life of the city child than it is in the life of the country child. Altho membership in any school group is essentially compulsory and arbitrary, this feature is far less manifest in the rural than in the city school. Family and personal interests and desires are more respected and catered to in the country. The city school, on the contrary, tends to separate and emancipate the child from the home and neighborhood more completely and effectively.

There are still other contacts made by the child in his neighborhood thru institutions and organizations such as the church, the Sunday school, clubs, shops, stores, amusement places, theaters, parks and various other agencies. In the city such contacts are numerous, frequent and varied, whereas in the country they are few and infrequent. In other words, the country child usually lives in a relatively unorganized and uninstitutionalized community. Hence he develops contact habits that are less formal, systematic and obligatory than those that are ordinarily formed by his city cousin.

Every neighborhood has its economic activities. In certain residential urban areas these may not be important while in other sections they will be overwhelming. More than likely there will be a factory *milieu*, or one of business or trade for the city child. He will be part of it from infancy and grow up to fit into some niche

³ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

of the system. The more fortunate children will grow up without much touch with the economic life, for business and home in a suburban neighborhood or a residential section are pretty thoroly separated. For such children the work of the city goes on more or less as a passing show, having little directly to do in the conditioning of their minds.

In the country the business of farming is omnipresent. It is indoors as well as out. It intrudes itself into every phase of family life. The child grows up in it and is a part of it, unconsciously serving an apprenticeship to the occupation from infancy. He learns the traditions and does the things that pertain to farming as a matter of course. He simulates its tasks at play and wishes to be grown in order to do them as his elders. Thus the neighborhood *milieu* is an occupational one of a unique sort. In it the child and youth always have a part in providing the elemental things of living. It is providing for self rather than being altogether provided for by others. The uniqueness of this environment consists not only in the fact that the occupation of farming is everything and everywhere, but in the further fact that there is but the one occupation. The city, of course, has many occupations. As it is often said, farming is a mode of living. This scarcely holds true of any other occupation. Consequently this mode of living influences the individual in a peculiar way.

3. A third circle into which the individual enters as he reaches maturity lies beyond the neighborhood. It is the larger community. It differs from the neighborhood in being the more embracing interest realm of the mature person.

As the country child comes to maturity and begins to participate in the community life, it is only to be subjected to forces that fix and deepen the mental attitudes that have long been in process of formation. He customarily moves in an environment affording neither many nor varied social contacts. Farmsteads are remote from one another and families isolated, so that they meet only occasionally. Nor has there normally been frequent visits to the village or town. The farmer lives much on the farm. No doubt he is tending nowadays, with the auto and good roads, to get away more

than formerly, but for all this change, farming still ties one down. Work indoors and out is mostly carried on alone. Companionship in the fields is more with plant and animal life than with human beings. In the house companionship even of this sort is denied the average housewife.

It is not thus with the city dweller, who is a more mobile being in an environment thronged with other mobile beings. Daily contacts are numerous. However brief and formal and largely empty of content these are, they nevertheless furnish a distinctly human *milieu*. "The sociological aspect of these relationships is therefore best defined as one of spatial proximity and social distance. They are merely the transitory meetings of strangers in which the individual uniqueness of the participant remains hidden behind a shield of formal objectivity, aloofness, and indifference."⁴ Nevertheless these contacts remain human, and the environment is social in a degree that no rural community ever attains.

The effects of this relative isolation in the country are heightened by virtue of the uniformity in type of personality. There are farmers, farmers everywhere, and little else; hence like must associate with like. In the city the very opposite is the case. There one finds men of many functions, men subdued to a great variety of works, and hence of many types.

Of organization there is relatively little in the country but much in the city. The farmer may have a club, a local of some farmers' organization such as the Grange, a lodge in the near-by village, a church, and a coöperative association to which he belongs. But that will be about the limit of his participation in organizations; hence he does not become much entangled and bound by them. He never ceases to live chiefly in primary relationships, where personality is of first consideration and organization of only minor significance. Personality thus remains free and the attitude of independence prevails. The city man, in contrast, lives where interest associations have almost completely superseded the primary. In them he would inevitably lose his uniqueness of personality were it not for the

⁴ Nicholas J. Spykman, "A Social Philosophy of the City," *Proceedings of the American Sociological Society*, Vol. XX, 1926, p. 50.

great variety to which he must adjust himself. He becomes, however, more coöperative and less independent.

The most important single factor of every environment is the cultural element. Behavior is direct response to the stimuli of tradition or culture. In the non-material culture of country and city there is much that is common, coming down as it has in the great thought currents of Western civilization. But there is also much that is different. The long transmitted beliefs and practices of agriculture are characterized by great definiteness and fixity. Much of the heritage of urban society is less ancient and inflexible. Moreover, the culture of the city is a composite of many elements, embodying varied arts and occupations, the heritage of diverse ethnic groups, the beliefs and practices of many different religions, ethical and political parties, and the contributions of numerous institutions and organizations. In such a situation competition and conflict are rife. The pool is always troubled. Stagnation is impossible. Not all city dwellers or any of them come under the full influence of all its cultural resources, but the resources are there and directly and indirectly the urbanite is molded by them. In no respect are country and city more in contrast than in the matter of culture. The body of tradition differs not only in kind but also in range of variety. Altho agriculture is really a number of occupations combined into one requiring much versatility, there is nevertheless a sameness about it everywhere. This is the case even tho farmers range from cotton-growers, wheat-producers, and corn-raisers, to dairymen, and from share-croppers and cowboys to migratory laborers. Despite the fact that versatility and resourcefulness are required of the individual to a degree not usual in the city, there is wanting in the country contact with that great variety of thought and practices which numerous occupations sustain in the city. In other words, there is wanting that clash of systems that gives stimulation. The cumulative effect tends to produce in the rural dweller a static type of mind.

Again, the cultures of the city and country are different as regards the property institution. In the latter most people own property, either real or personal. There are inequalities of wealth, but

not very glaring ones nor such as are commonly expressed in conspicuous display, nor such as tend to destroy association, as we so often find in the city. Still, the country has a strong sense of ownership, of property rights, and of the privileges of private possession. In the city there are generally many more who are propertyless and who live chiefly in association with this type. Then, of course, there are some who move in a sphere where great property interests rule everything. No one, however rich or poor, escapes the influence of the economic disparity. Nor does he escape the influence of an environment where public property bulks large. For the urban community provides many things for its people that the countryman does not have at all. Thus, deprived as he is of much private ownership, the average urbanite learns to depend upon other peoples' and the public's property for such enjoyment as he has of this institution.

The material features of the individuals' environment must not be overlooked. In the city these are mainly artificial creations, while in the country they are natural. The one is an environment where things are made, the other where things are grown. The countryman struggles with nature to grow plants and animals. The seasons, the weather, the soil, the germination of seeds and the multiplication of animals are his constant concern. The processes of nature, her caprices and her decrees are the things he must reckon with. The urbanite has instead to reckon more with human nature and the materials that man fabricates into a variety of wares. The cityman's world is one in which the human will has great power. Man is far less the master in the country, where Fate is supreme. Corra Harris vividly describes the farmer's dependence on Nature in the following: "I am now at the quivering stage of uncertainty through which every farmer passes just before he takes the plunge and cuts his hay anyhow. The worth of the crop depends upon his judgment and the weather. I have a very fine field of soy beans. The leaves are beginning to turn at the bottom of the vines, but the beans have not filled out. If I cut them too soon the leaves will turn dark, parch and drop off, and the beans will be worthless. If I wait, the spell of bad weather we always have around the equinox

may delay the harvesting too long. Meanwhile, the bean beetle is within three miles of this place, consuming everything as it comes. And every man who has this kind of hay is cutting it regardless of whether it is mature or not. I know exactly how a speculator feels when he is in doubt about whether to sell or hold on the risk of losing everything in order to make a greater profit. Every year of my life on this farm I have passed through these tremors of uncertainty and anxiety. I expected to have the hay cut yesterday, but the night before there was lightning in the north, not flashes but real forked lightning—a sure sign of rain in this section. Today the wind is from the east, the sky overcast—no rain yet, but the weather too threatening to risk haying.”⁵

In the foregoing analysis we have tried to indicate the chief determiners of the rural mind in contrast to the urban. By way of summary, we may say that they are certain distinct qualities and influences of the rural *physical environment*, the *societal situation*, the *occupational activities*, the *demographical conditions*, and the *cultural medium*.

Characteristic Mental Attitudes of the Farmer

1. *Extreme individualism* is one of the outstanding attitudes of the farmer. His is the “I” rather than the “we” outlook. It may be described as an individualism of isolation, because it is self determination largely without social pressure and in the presence of a great deal of solitude. Moreover, it is a type of behavior growing out of a situation in which the making of choices, decisions and adaptations is always exigent, but is a single-handed performance.

In the city, with its highly human and artificial environment, the possibilities for the development of individualism are almost unlimited, for there life's options most abound and the pressure to select lines of conduct and relationships is insistent. This means unbounded opportunity for the individualism of choice rather than that of isolation. At the same time, a tremendous pressure is upon

⁵ Corra Harris, reprinted from the *Country Gentleman*, January 5, 1924, p. 6. Copyright, 1924, by the Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pa.

the many to escape the necessity of choice and to take refuge in restricted groups, classes and crowds, and to conform to conventional behavior patterns. In consequence the masses of the city are lacking in much individualism. They tend instead to be mass minded, uniform, and conventional.

The farmer's individualism manifests itself in a fairly wide range of habits of self-reliance and independent action. He thinks his own thoughts and pursues his own course. He sets his own tasks and knows when they are done. He lays great store by personal qualities as making for success or failure. Social factors are relatively negligible in his calculations. For this reason the farmer has found it difficult to engage in team work and organized effort. The activities of farm youth indicate this, as brought out in a study where 60.4 per cent of the boys and 70.5 per cent of the girls in a Georgia rural area preferred to work alone in contrast to 39.9 per cent of the boys and 33.9 per cent of the girls in a more urbanized Illinois district.*

It has been said that there is no public opinion in the country; that is, no opinion held by the community which has been arrived at thru discussion. There is individual and family opinion, but little more. Prejudice, bigotry, and "petrified emotion" of one sort and another is far more prevalent in the country than in the city. Some call this public opinion, which, of course, it is not. The explanation of the prevalence of prejudice instead of public opinion is found in part in the individualism of the farmer. The habit of relying on one's own thoughts stands in the way of assembly for discussion, of amicable discussion if assembled, and consequently of the integration of ideas in the community.

The farmer's individualism is seen again in a strong sense of personal rivalry. To worst the other fellow at work, to show one's self to be the "better man," to sell one's produce at a better price than the neighbor got, to buy more advantageously, to get ahead of him in planting or harvesting, and in a multitude of other ways to outdo others, has been a source of much joy to the American

* Harold H. Punke, "Leisure-Time Attitudes and Activities of High-School Students," *School and Society*, July 27, 1936, p. 885.

farmer. This same spirit appears where questions of leadership arise. There is great jealousy of anyone who seeks to lead, for it seems that no one in the country likes to be a follower. This attitude appears even among country children at play. They are inclined to prefer games where someone is "it," and to contest bitterly for place. In a community it often appears as if there was a mutual conspiracy of all against the ascendancy of any one. And where there is recognized leadership, not infrequently the man or woman at the head of things is there by sheer self assertiveness driven by an inordinate love of power. Such persons will lord it over others without any sense of the social function to be performed.

Another evidence of the individualistic attitude appears in the lack of much conscious imitateness. To imitate for the sake of keeping up with the Joneses, i. e., merely to conform, is not particularly the farmer's way. If he imitates—and he does it just as men everywhere do—it is to a much larger extent unconscious imitation than is that of the city.

2. *Conservatism* is another conspicuous rural attitude. This does not at first thought seem to be consistent with ultra-individualism, and yet on closer analysis it is apparent that the latter tends to foster conservatism. For the individualism of isolation conduces to great fixity of habits and opinions, naturally incapacitating for social change. At best the human mind is fundamentally conservative anyhow, and when circumstances favor, it easily becomes extremely so. In the words of James Harvey Robinson, "It conforms, it changeth not, it does not venture, but returns under the pull of instincts to its old and customary ways where it is sure." Now the countryman's environment, as we have seen, is ruled over by the influence of the weather and physical nature; characterized by isolation, homogeneity of culture, of occupation and of contacts; and swayed by property interests and the requirements of incessant action without much thought—all of which is peculiarly conducive to the development of customary modes of behavior.

Evidence that such behavior prevails is seen, among other things, in the extensive use of formulas, rules of action, wise sayings and

proverbs.⁷ These are illustrated in such aphorisms as, "There is a seed time and a harvest," "An hour in the morning is worth two at night," "So many fogs in February, so many frosts in May." The extensive use of formulas reflects a static mental attitude. The savage, bound by the cake of custom, thinks and speaks in this manner. And the civilized man, to the degree that he lives by the inherited ways of his fathers and is uncritical and undisturbed by innovating influences, does likewise. As Professor J. M. Williams has well said, the "use of formulas is a mental habit that is common among agricultural peoples the world over. It is everywhere the cornerstone of the conservative mind."⁸ In rural America it is one of the signs that the farmer goes along as he always has and as his father had before him, and still keeps going.

Change is generally most easily effected in the economic sphere. But it is apparently harder to induce the American farmer to change his methods than it is to persuade the city man to adopt new ways. The farmer holds tenaciously to old and outgrown ways long after new and better ones are known to him. He fears to experiment. The hazards may be greater in agriculture than in industry or business, for the process of farming is less under human control, and this may partially explain the farmer's slowness to change. But the absence of immediately felt competition is also a factor. This conservative reaction is seen, for instance, in relation to practically all public affairs to which the farmer responds. His record is generally one of opposition to reform in economic policies. He habitually votes down schemes of tax reform, and defeats programs involving the outlay of money for public welfare unless he can see some direct benefit to himself. Even when the benefit is pretty clear, the chances are the change will not be approved.

And yet there have been radical movements sponsored by the farmers. However, such movements have not been radical from principle; they have been motivated by self-interest. For, except where the shoe has pinched, those who have enlisted in these movements have opposed or been indifferent to all other radical causes. Moreover, the history of agrarian upheavals in America reveals the

⁷ J. M. Williams, *Our Rural Heritage*, pp. 168-169.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

fact that the malcontents have quickly abandoned radical causes just as soon as conditions have improved the least bit. They have lost all interest in altering society or pushing their particular programs and have become, on the whole, the most complacent and reactionary of men. As Professor A. B. Wolfe says:

"The American farmer in his hitherto futile attempts to protect himself from the organized commercial interests, has time and again manifested this *ad hoc* radicalism: granger legislation, greenbackism, populism, free silverism, coöperative marketing, 'Un-American' agricultural blocs in Congress, Non-partizan leagues, and proposals for governmental fixation of farm-product prices are all illustrative. Incidentally he has never failed to be roundly lectured for his foolishness. He has never been a real radical-from-principle, however. There would never have been a Non-partizan League had not the grain dealers pressed the wheat growers a trifle beyond the limit of endurance."⁹

In all fairness it should be added that there are here and there spots of true radicalism in the rural districts. Where hard and oppressive conditions persist, as for instance, among the tenants of the Southwest, radicalism from principle seems to have arisen. This is perhaps more proletarian than agrarian, however.

Further evidence of dogged adherence to custom is seen in moral and religious behavior. The stronghold of theological fundamentalism is found in rural districts. It is belief sustained, like agricultural practices, by oral tradition, not by rational thought.

Some interesting data on the conservatism of farm people were gathered by *The Country Home* in 1931. On a wide variety of subjects 13,431 persons, two-thirds of them being farmers and one-third villagers, responded to a questionnaire. The questions were framed to determine attitudes on control of schools, school consolidation, use of cigarettes by women, tobacco advertisements in farm papers, prohibition, corporate farming, religion, various farm relief schemes, divorce, birth control, and other issues. The only question on which a large majority did not express a thoroly conservative

⁹ A. B. Wolfe, *Conservatism, Radicalism, and Scientific Method*, p. 135. Copyright 1923 by the Macmillan Co., N. Y. Reprinted by permission.

attitude was birth control. On that question over two-thirds expressed themselves favorably. This was thought to indicate changing standards in harmony with changing economic and technical conditions requiring smaller families in agriculture. On the other hand, it may have signified no liberalization at all, for among those who have always practiced birth control in animal breeding, the control of human procreation may not be considered a moral issue.¹⁰ However, a subsequent inquiry on the questions originally submitted showed a definite shift to more liberal views.

3. *The magical mind* rather than the scientific attitude tends to prevail in the country. This is an emotional and unreflective attitude which does not clearly perceive the steps between thoughts and acts or habitually take them. It does things that are inconsequential and that in no wise further the ends sought, but are nevertheless esteemed important. The scientific attitude is quite the opposite. It reflects and sees the necessary links between ideas and objects or actions, and supplies the connections in its procedure. Much more of this attitude is manifested in the ordinary life of the city than in that of the country. For in the city "the external conditions of existence are so evidently contrived to meet man's clearly recognized needs that the least intellectual of peoples are inevitably led to think in deterministic and mechanistic terms."¹¹ In the country the great forces of nature are mysterious and uncontrollable, capricious and unpredictable; hence they tend to mystify and befuddle man.

Expressions of this magical mindedness are seen in numerous superstitious beliefs and practices in regard to planting and harvesting. And until just recently it was also seen in a pretty general distrust of scientific methods and knowledge. There was the disposition to pray for rain and to keep the Sabbath holy in order to secure the favor of God, who orders the seasons.¹² Of late, however, there are signs that this attitude is giving way. The scientific demonstration of the control of plant and animal diseases and, particularly,

¹⁰ Russell Lord, "Cross Section of the Rural Mind," *The New Republic*, Sept. 24, 1930, pp. 146-151.

¹¹ Robert E. Park, "Magic, Mentality and City Life," *Publications of the American Sociological Society*, Vol. 18, p. 108.

¹² J. M. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

the forecasting of the weather by the United States Weather Bureau have made a deep impression.

The supernatural persistently holds the central place in the magically minded. Thus Thomas and Znaniecki write of the Polish peasant:

"The ultimate result of farm work does not depend exclusively upon the worker himself; his best efforts can be frustrated by unforeseen circumstances and in a particularly good year even neglected work may be well repaid. On the background of religious and magical beliefs this incalculable element gives birth to a particular kind of fatalism. . . . The essential point is to get the help of God, the distributor of good, against the indifferent forces of nature and the intentionally harmful magical forces of hostile men and devils. Now . . . the process of work itself is a means of influencing God favorably; it is even the most indispensable condition of assuring God's help, for without it no religious magic will do any good."¹³

True, indeed, the American farmer, as Professor Williams has emphasized, does not stress the supernatural in anything like the same measure as the Polish peasant, and yet the two have considerable in common. The American is more inclined to emphasize industriousness first and to regard it as only one of the important means of getting supernatural aid.¹⁴

4. *An emotional intensity and high degree of suggestibility* is another trait of the farmer. At the same time, the farmer is stolid and austere and noted for habits of restraint. Feelings are repressed, especially the tender emotions. Despite the seeming contradictions in these statements, they are both true, for there is habitual repression of feelings under some circumstances and extreme outbursts under others. Associating only in a limited way with his fellows, the farmer has not built up habits of response to stimulation from human sources. The checks and balances to the emotions that prevail among people used to one another thru constant association are apt to be wanting in the ruralite. His feelings, prejudices and be-

¹³ Thomas and Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, p. 174.

¹⁴ J. M. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

liefs are not socialized; they are, as it were, untamed. The result is intense, often distorted, and always highly subjective, introspective convictions that are unused to the rough and tumble treatment of public life. Hence their possessors are "touchy" and when affronted tend to explode in a rather violent fashion. Easily slighted and injured, the farmer is quick to resent things and to demand respect tho he may not be able to command it. He does not quickly or easily forgive, but harbors grudges. Any social stimulation is therefore likely to produce more extreme response than would be called out among urbanites.

Perhaps it may fairly be said that altho conservative in his normal thought habits, the farmer is radical in his emotional responses, or at least tends to become so under circumstances that would scarcely disturb the equanimity of the urbanite.

Manifestations of this attitude have been conspicuous in various relations and in all parts of the country. Neighborhood feuds have been common. Mobs and lynchings have been of frequent occurrence, especially in the most rural parts of America, namely, the Southern states. Religious revivalism of the wildest sort has long flourished in all sections of rural America. And waves of organized emotionalism of one sort or another, kindred in nature to the Ku Klux Klan, have swept thru the rural population. These excesses, it is significant to note, have been the chief occasions for mass action among countrymen. The camp-meeting, the lynching, the white caps, the night-riders, the Klan crowd are particular examples of such action. Moreover, this action has usually taken some form of man-exploitation, such as "man-baiting" in revivals, "man-hunting" in lynchings, "man-killings" in feuds, "man-terrorizing" in night-riding, white-cap attacks and cattle raiding or border warfare.

The farmer has been called gullible, and with justice, for he has been easily victimized by fakes and frauds. This is due not alone to his ignorance of the art of working other people for one's living, but also to his high degree of suggestibility. Altho skeptical, he is not analytically critical, and hence is apt to be imposed upon when subjected to the right sort of suggestion.

5. *Thriftiness and frugality* also are attitudes seen among farmers more than among urban people. Other people may be wholly bent on material gain as well as the farmer, but, taken as a class, he is perhaps more meanly engrossed in property interests than any other large section of the population. This comes of the slow and difficult process of extracting a living from the soil. Rural wealth is hard won. Indeed it has not been possible to win it at all except by the most careful husbanding of resources. Therefore to save became, as it were, the chief end of existence for the many. In the age of the frontier and homespun, when attitudes were taking shape in rural society, there was little or no money and little or no ambition except to make a living. Saving then had to do with things—food, crops, clothing, tools, animals and buildings. When, later, world markets opened and agriculture began to be somewhat commercialized and the farmer could sell his crop for money, then the saving habit was transferred from things of consumption to money. The commercial era also compelled the spending of money, for more things had to be bought, since they could no longer be supplied by home labor. The tendency was therefore toward less frugality. This tendency has gone on until one sees today less of the old-time thrift among the younger farmers. Nevertheless, in the main, thriftiness still characterizes the farm dwellers, for income is rarely regular, as it is in the city. It comes at odd intervals and by seasons and must be conserved and made to tide over from the sale of one crop to another. So, in spite of influences against it, the saving habit still persists.¹⁵

Almost every phase of conduct in the country reflects this attitude. The standard by which people are ordinarily judged involves their saving proclivities. The man who builds his barns and fences, increases the quantity or quality of his flocks and herds, adds more acres to his holdings and thus in one way and another gets ahead, is highly esteemed. For the free spender and the one who consumes as fast as he makes, there is general contempt. A generous standard of living in place of the customary cramped and niggardly

¹⁵ J. M. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-92.

one so often prevalent is likely to be frowned upon. There are signs, however, that this attitude is changing. In general and historically, the most cautious and calculating procedure with reference to all expenditures is in vogue. The cost is counted and the question asked whether this or that can be afforded before money is spent for anything that will not obviously contribute to more gain. Too often the decision is that it cannot be afforded. Thus a spirit of penuriousness holds sway.

It is therefore not strange that the farmer does not, even when able, give generous support to public causes. Altho personally generous and helpful toward his neighbors, giving of his produce and services for the relief of those about him who may be in distress freely and to a degree unsurpassed by any class, he is no philanthropist. He does not as a rule sustain institutions devoted to the public welfare in proportion to their merits or his ability. There is lack of interest in charity as an organized service in the country. It is the practice of the countryman to vote down tax levies for the improvement of institutions such as asylums, schools, homes for dependent classes, hospitals, etc. He will vote taxes for good roads, and other things that he thinks will benefit him materially, but otherwise he withholds his sanction rather more persistently than does the man of other occupations. He thinks the efficiency of governmental and social action should be judged by the amount of parsimony practiced, just as his domestic affairs are judged.

The consequences of this attitude toward reform has been pointed out by Professor L. L. Bernard, from whom we quote: "If one were setting forth general principles to guide the demagogue or the social worker in making an appeal to the rural population, they might be stated in something like these words: Appeal must be made to the farmer on the basis of his self-interest rather than on that of social welfare; on the basis of his personal sympathy rather than on that of social utility; on the basis of his religious and political convictions and in the terminology of catch-phrases, symbols, and shibboleths rather than on that of formal scientific principles. Yet it would be quite inaccurate to say that no appeal for the better things of life can be presented to the farmer. On the contrary, there

is perhaps no industrial class more conscientious within the limits of his thinking." ¹⁶

6. *Suspiciousness* is another attitude of the rural mind. There is a surprising amount of distrust among people of the same neighborhood. Those who have grown up together are apt to exhibit this trait toward one another. One wonders if the Scotch verdict which holds every man guilty until he is proved innocent was not of rural origin. The existence of this attitude must be referred to the situation in which men are habitually more dependent upon and conversant with inanimate things and domestic animals than with their fellows. They have a nature rather than a social configuration. ¹⁷ Out of this situation there arises distrust of human nature. Moreover, there has been until of late almost no dependence upon organizations of one's fellows; nor, in fact, have such organizations been numerous. So the countryman of the generations recently past staked little on the action of other men nor did he learn to trust them much.

Part of the traditional hostility of the farmer toward the townsman had its explanation in this suspiciousness. An anti-social attitude working to his disadvantage thus prevailed.

A changed world of communication, competition, commercial interests and governmental intervention has forced him to organize. Thru many coöperative agencies he now finds himself acting in conjunction with his fellows. Thus he is developing new habits of interdependence and mutual trust and confidence. The old time suspiciousness is therefore passing. Evidence of this is seen, for instance, in a more cordial relation between farmers and village tradesmen.

7. *Frankness*, too, is an outstanding characteristic of the rural people. A blunt, straightforward, direct method of approach and communication is in vogue. It is in rather marked contrast to the tact, diplomacy, and indirection that conceals as much as it reveals, which we find in urban life. In the rural environment the condition-

¹⁶ L. L. Bernard, "Theory of Social Attitudes," *American Journal of Sociology*, March, 1917, p. 648.

¹⁷ J. M. Williams, *The Expansion of Rural Life*, p. 6.

ing circumstances are perhaps first of all to be found in the play of Nature upon human beings. Nature is straightforward and sincere and the occupation that has commerce with her must play fair. The absence of the artificial and made-to-order tends to beget a genuineness in men. In the second place, all associations are highly personal. Everybody knows and is known to everybody else in the community. That knowledge, moreover, is pretty thoro and comprehensive. So pretense and efforts to conceal virtually become impossible. To pose, to "put on airs," to hide behind a mask, will not go in the country. Thus a premium is put on frankness and truthfulness is developed. The farmer says what he means and means what he says; he does not flatter or speak for effect.

This attitude shows itself in a considerable disregard for social conventions. The countryman tends to look upon them as unnatural and put-on and hence insincere. He is, therefore, inclined to lean too far the other way and to become boorish. Traditionally the American farmer has taken pride in his crude ways, sometimes no doubt merely for the sake of self-expression in competition with the city man, but more often as a natural man asserting his integrity unconsciously. The few conventions that function in rural society are those meeting the needs of direct, personal contacts within a like-minded group. More social ritual than this seems to the farmer false and hollow form.

The foregoing list of rural attitudes is not necessarily a complete and exhaustive inventory of the rural mind. Other traits more or less in contrast to those of the urbanite might be pointed out, but it is enough to indicate the outstanding differences between the two types. For what is significant for our purpose is to show that there are two general types and that rural and urban social behavior are in consequence more or less divergent.

Changing Attitudes

Conditions change and mental habits must perforce sooner or later follow suit. Rural society in America is undergoing alteration, fairly rapid in some respects, slow in others, but certain in all. And

one discerns a modification of the farmers' psychology to correspond.

Urbanization is taking place. There is abundant evidence of it, but not sufficient to demonstrate that the rural mind is going to disappear and leave only the urban thruout the land. For so long as there remain two distinct types of environment, two widely different sets of occupations and two wholly unlike modes of dwelling in which men are born and bred there will remain a rural mind and an urban mind. Certain differences that have hitherto made the rural and urban types distinct may tend to be toned down under urbanizing influences, but scarcely more is to be expected.

There are certain specific factors at work effecting change. One is the *mechanization of agriculture*. Altho this influence has been at work for a long time, it has been accelerated in recent years and thru a cumulative effect is being felt more and more profoundly. The psychology we have described was a product of a non-mechanized agriculture under which brawn counted for more than brain and men had to rely more on their power to lift than upon ability to make subtle adjustments thru thought processes. Farming in the pre-mechanical era made the peasant type ox-like in strength, but mentally static. There was neither occasion nor time for mental alertness. As Dr. Galpin has said: "Nature denies to the mind of the peasant lifter and carrier the privilege of having his big muscle movement summon into the stream of his ideas and thinking the rich and varied ideas stored up in latent form in his higher brain areas. Provided by heredity with all the mechanism of suggestibility and a consequent potential wealth of ideas in his upper brain, the primitive hoe man's heavy work in the major activities of his occupation cannot automatically relate itself to this mechanism and awaken an intellectual life."¹⁸ When we recognize in addition the fact that the grind of hard manual labor in which the farmer spends most of his time is extremely fatiguing and stultifying, we have gone far toward explaining his mentality. Altho the American farmer has generally been more favorably situated than the European peasant, he has not escaped the hoe-farming influences that

¹⁸ C. J. Galpin, *Rural Life*, pp. 33-34.

shaped the peasant mind. His psychology in consequence has had much in common with the peasant's.

Since mechanization of agriculture is lifting the burden of hard, "bone" labor, preventing so much excessive fatigue, increasing leisure, and making both possible and necessary more thinking and a more subtle type of adjustment, a veritable new cerebral type is being selected. The use of the finer muscles of the hand and eye instead of the heavy muscles of the limbs and back are responsible for the change. The sensory nerve centers are thus stimulated more and on the thought side a stream of mental associations is caused to flow into consciousness. "The logical outcome of this charter of right and privilege to the muscles of the hand and fingers is a large range of intellectual intercourse, a constant enticement of a change in ideas."¹⁹ Thus the hoe-farmer mind is being modified by a new set of circumstances.

Evidences of change due to mechanization are not so easy to indicate. And yet certain things are appearing that seem to trace to this influence. There is a noticeable absence of the old-time pride in physical prowess. Countrymen do not boast of their ability to lift, to pitch so much hay or cut so many shocks of corn in a day, as they did when all work of this sort was done by hand. In fact, the older generation that was inured to these things is critical of the present one because it is said to be soft, weak, and afraid of work. The real significance of this judgment is that a new set of work habits has begun to appear, giving more leisure. And these in turn perhaps imply a growing sense of mastery and freedom from customary and traditional ways. In other words, it may indicate a certain retreat from ultra conservatism.

However, should mechanization lead to the development of extensive large-scale agriculture, it would displace not only tenants, and sharecroppers, but also many self-sufficient, independent operators. The effect would be to lessen the individuality and independence which has so long been associated with family farming and to develop dependence and impersonal relationships.²⁰

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²⁰ B. O. Williams, "The Impact of Mechanization of Agriculture on the Farm Population of the South," *Rural Sociology*, Sept., 1939, p. 305.

Increased mobilization is another factor that is probably working modification in rural psychology. The introduction of motor vehicles within the last three decades on 58 per cent of the farms has revolutionized country life. It has set the whole countryside in motion. Everybody is going as never before. New contacts are being made, the number and frequency of contacts are being greatly multiplied, and a far greater variety of experiences is being secured than in the days of the horse-drawn vehicle. The area in which the farmer lives has suddenly widened in every direction. Community no longer has the narrow meaning it once had. Local isolation has been invaded by the outside world, neighborhood provincialism has been much disturbed, where not altogether broken up, and many of the old customs which bound the former generations have been discarded. The whole life of the rural people has been quickened, broadened, and made more hopeful by means of this mobilization.

The specific effects upon the rural mind are certain subtle changes that will probably grow more pronounced with the lapse of time. The thriftiness of the farmer is probably undergoing alteration, not so much directly from the mobilization of people, however, as from the demands and appeals that the means of mobilization are making. Conservatism and individualism cannot long remain quite the same under present conditions. The mind will be shaken out of its fixed attitudes by widening experiences and contacts. Already there seems to be a letting down in that individualism which so long kept the farmers unorganized, for the coöperative movement has grown rapidly in recent years. One wonders if it would have made any such headway had it not been for the influence of the automobile.

Mobilization, however, is but one development in the more general field of *widening and quickening communication*. Devices for spreading ideas, such as the telephone, the radio, and the Rural Free Delivery are of as much significance as are motor transportation. In 1930 there were 34.0 per cent of the farms which had telephones. The 1930 census found over one-fifth of the farm homes and over a third of the rural non-farm homes provided with

radios. Rural mail routes serve most farm families in daily delivery. By these several means of communication the farmer is coming more and more to participate in the thought and life of the whole world, for the newspaper is coming regularly to his table, and over the telephone and radio the voices of many people from afar, together with all sorts of information and entertainment. The total effect of this has yet to be measured, but one may conjecture that a new mental outlook is coming to the ruralite. The increased stimulation will tend to influence the emotional reactions of country people. A greater sense of unity with the town and city is being fostered, for certainly the process is one of uniformitization and urbanization.

The *commercialization of agriculture* also is to be reckoned with. This process has been going on in a measure ever since world markets became available to the agriculturist and he ceased to be a producer merely for self-consumption. But the process did not signify much in relation to mental attitudes until definite emphasis began to be put on the strictly business aspects of farming and the farmer himself became conscious of the fact that selling his product was the all important feature of his occupation. As country life has passed into this phase during the last two or three decades new practices have made their appearance. More specialized farming has come in. Products are being graded, packed, and standardized in greater degree. Markets are being studied and organizations created for selling purposes. Incidentally the growth of wayside marketing and coöperative marketing is a conspicuous development. Thus the farmer is becoming more of a business man. He is taking a leaf from the townsman's book.

This development indicates a changing rural psychology; it represents also a new force at work which will probably effect still further change. Just what modifications of the rural mind are to be looked for, is not altogether clear, but it would seem that competition among farmers should be lessened, suspiciousness allayed, and more interdependence created as they are forced to meet the problems of marketing. It is not unlikely that the struggle in which this commercialization is involving them will render them

less frank and straightforward. Above all, more intelligence is going to be necessary to get on under this system. Those who do not acquire it will fail. Hence the prospects are that the rural mind will become more dynamic.

The rise of organization has been referred to in connection with this agricultural commercialization. The latter has been responsible for the extensive growth of coöperatives, which mark a new phase of rural association from primary to secondary grouping. Such associations are multiplying both in number and variety and are giving to those who participate in them something that the primary group does not give. New obligations, new interests, new loyalties, and new opportunities are involved. These, as it were, furnish the farmer with a new education. If he proves an apt pupil in the new school, he is bound to become in many ways a different sort of socius from what he has been. His old attitudes will require revision as he functions in the new relations.

The introduction of the *scientific method into agriculture* has already been alluded to. As an agency of psychological change, its significance is great. Its impress is already marked and the agencies that are carrying it to the farmers are persistent. The demonstrations of scientific method in crop production, animal husbandry, the control of plant and animal diseases and of insect pests, and in the storage and preservation of farm products have been the means of converting many countrymen to the cause of scientific farming. With much prestige already established for this method, rapid headway will normally be made in the future. To the degree such progress is made the magical attitude will disappear from among those groups where it still lingers. And eventually, when the habitual attitudes are broken down in relation to the agricultural process, the new reactions established will carry over into the social affairs of the farmer. It may well be that we have in the making the most scientifically minded class in the nation.

Demonstration workers have discovered that the farmer is not content with the technique alone of better production, but is beginning to ask about the theory behind it. In other words, the method is awakening an intellectual curiosity and arousing the

spirit of inquiry.²¹ Whenever this happens, there is proof positive that magic is doomed. For some at least it may mean the lifting of agriculture to the level of an intellectual vocation. Doubtless, however, for many the scientific method will not arouse intellectual interests; they will be content to pursue the occupation merely as an art. Nevertheless the unintellectual many will hardly be able to hold fast to sign farming with science poking fun at them and winning all the prizes.

Finally, the crisis of commercial agriculture, which followed on the heels of the World War and reached its climax with the development of the industrial depression, has brought another psychology-shaping factor upon the rural scene. This new factor is *governmental intervention in the form of crop control*. Altho several other forms of governmental intervention, such as extensive credit aid, resettlement projects, and rural relief have developed under the New Deal, no one of them has as wide application as crop control. We may, therefore, emphasize its role.

When faced with inadequate and shrinking markets, unregulated individualism proved a failure at commercial farming. In order to save it, government stepped in with a scheme for restricting production. The profit-seeking farmers therefore found themselves compelled to adopt a course of action prescribed for them by the interests of all instead of by the dictates of their own individual preferences. This was a new and unprecedented situation quite at variance with customary procedure, but the only alternative appeared to be bankruptcy; hence control was accepted. If this control is long continued, as appears probable it will be, the rural behavior pattern will surely undergo considerable change in consequence. Habits of dependence in place of independence, of putting community interests above private ones, of conformity to a course of action not of their own choosing instead of to lines of personal preference, may become the established patterns of conduct among farmers. Even after a brief period of control there are signs of the emergence of such new patterns. They may not become fixed in the character structure of the present adult generation, but they

²¹ E. R. Groves, *The Rural Mind and Social Welfare*, pp. 133-134.

will become a part of the social heritage by which the habits of the succeeding generation are molded.

It must be recognized that there are forces at work tending to nullify or retard the influences that are altering traditional rural attitudes. City drift is perhaps the most important of these, for the selective effect of migration may tend to leave in the country the more traditionally minded. If such has been the result, change has been slowed down. On the whole, it would seem to be a fair judgment that the forces of change have come to outweigh those that hinder it.

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Topics for Discussion

1. What urban attitudes, if any, have appeared in your rural community in recent years? Are people conscious of them and do they approve or condemn?
2. Have any of the attitudes described in the chapter exercised a detrimental influence in the life of your community? If so, show in what respect.
3. What is the least traditional attitude you have observed among country youth?
4. Which of the attitudes described in the chapter seems to be undergoing definite change? To what specific influences does the change appear to be due?
5. If large-scale mechanized agriculture should become extensively developed how would it affect the psychological attitudes and relationships of farm people?
6. Do the farmers you know lack any of the particular attitudes we have described? If so, what ones or in what degree do they lack them?

THE PRIMARY TRADITION

Tradition Classified

THE body of social tradition may be conveniently classified as follows: the economic, or "self-maintenance"; the genésic or sex and family; the political; the juridic; the religious; the moral; the æsthetic; the educative or intellectual; the recreative; and the health interest. This classification will serve our purpose in the canvass of rural culture.

An important distinction has been made between these various classes of tradition—one set has been called the primary, and the others, the derived or secondary.¹ The economic or self-maintenance mores, i. e., the ones which have to do with the struggle for existence, including "the most concrete and material activity of society,"² are the primary. All the others are called secondary in the sense that they are not the *conditio sine qua non* of existence. Rather are they functions of the self-maintenance mores.³

Our first concern is with the primary. Getting a living involves on the part of the farmer a process that is wholly unique compared with that followed by all others who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. It is unique in that it is the only occupation that is productive in the generic sense of the term. The earth is made to yield an increase and flocks and herds to reproduce, so that the stores of the world are added to as by no other means. There are other extractive industries, but this one is essentially originative. To entice gifts from nature is the farmer's occupation. Others may tax her stores or change the form and place of nature already existent, but the farmer's task is to make nature bring forth a new product.

¹ A. G. Keller, *Societal Evolution*, p. 133.

² *Ibid.*, p. 133.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

The technique of doing this with success is perhaps the most manifold, comprehensive, and complex of all arts. "An ancient occupation," says Carver, "pursued by countless generations, accumulates a vast fund of wisdom and skill, much of which escapes the pages of the written book, being transmitted from father to son on the thin air of oral tradition or of living example. Such an occupation is agriculture . . . In consequence of its antiquity and its universality there has developed a body of rural lore and technique, which has no counterpart anywhere else, but which is entirely underestimated by, if not absolutely unknown to, the urbanite. But because so much of it is learned outside of schools, by the actual process of doing rural work, father and son working together generation after generation, it does not commonly go under the name of 'learning.' Moreover, the marvelous technique of rural work is acquired in such a commonplace way that we frequently regard it as a matter of course, and do not appreciate that it is real technique."⁴

It is far from our purpose to describe in detail the manifold technique of husbandry. We shall take account only of what is distinctive in a comparative way and of what is particularly significant in its social bearing.

Three Levels of Agricultural Art

Agriculture in America is marked by one feature, namely, that it is carried on largely as an art. It is often pursued by a rule-of-thumb method. Its traditions are almost wholly empirical observations, which the masses apply uncritically generation after generation.

1. However, three levels of the art are discernible. These may be conveniently designated as the *magical or antiquated*, the *customary or practical*, and the *scientific*. At the first level are found magic and superstition. This body of beliefs and folkways surviving from a distant past is a persistent factor among farmers today. Probably no other occupational group, unless it is the sea-faring

⁴ Carver, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

craft, is so much under the influence of such traditions. One finds people in almost every rural community clinging to magical practices of every sort. Lists of superstitions have been gathered by the students of American folklore. F. B. Dressler cites some 7,176 examples. E. M. Fagel has recorded 2,083 among Pennsylvania Germans, and D. L. and L. B. Thomas 3,954 from Kentucky. By no means all of these are confined to the country districts nor do all have reference to the rural ways of getting a living. They cover a far wider range of experience than those directly connected with agriculture, but in running through *Kentucky Superstitions*, which records beliefs and practices that are by no means peculiar to or confined to Kentucky, I note fully one hundred that are directly connected with the weal and woe of the farmer. A few samples that are widely prevalent throughout rural regions run as follows: Sow turnips on the 25th of July, wet or dry. If you have a fruit tree that will not bear fruit, drive a peg or nail into it and make it bear. Set the first hen on Monday for good luck. Plant corn when the sign is in the arms. Sow grass always in the light of the moon. If a tree is struck by lightning, the fire may be put out by milk, but not by water. If beans are planted in the afternoon, they will drop the bloom. If you turn a cow dry on Sunday, her calf will be born in the daytime. Kill a frog and your cow will have bloody milk. If you buy a horse and change his name, you will have bad luck with it. Many similar beliefs could be added, for they are extensive.

One source of rural superstitions deserves special mention, since in many rural sections it is a highly respected authority. I refer to the "Agricultural Almanac," published in Lancaster, Pennsylvania for the last hundred years. This compendium of rural superstitions evidently has a wide circulation and hence is somewhat of an index to the hold magic has on country people. Here is a sample of its wisdom taken from an issue since 1920: "The days of each month in which the moon sign coincides with the sun sign the influence of the sign is supposed to be greatly intensified. The first day the moon is in a sign is better than the second, and the second than the third. Those who know the importance of these laws are

ready to plant at the proper time, knowing that seeds planted in a scanty sign, a scanty crop will follow; if planted in a fruitful sign, a full crop will follow. The time to plant the garden is when the earth is in a good sign, and the day to plant is when the moon is in the sign. The time to harvest is when the sign is right."

Other pages of this guide contain advice such as the following: "All crops that produce their yield above the surface of the ground should be planted in the increase light of the moon. . . . All root crops that produce their yield in the ground should be planted in the decrease light of the moon. . . . Timber cut in the old of the moon in August will not be eaten by worms nor snap in burning, and will last much longer than if cut at any other time. . . . The hair should be cut on the increase of the moon if you want a thick head of hair; on the decrease if you want the reverse. The same applies to sheep; if you shear sheep in the increase of the moon, their wool will grow again better and stronger.

"Poulterers, butchers and meat dealers should not kill when the moon is waning, during which period all dead matter tends to shrink, decay and decompose; this is the reason why meat sometimes shrinks on boiling and does not keep well. If butchered in full moon or a little before, pork will not only be better but will also swell up and enlarge in boiling. The roofs of houses and barns and other buildings should be shingled and wooden rail fences staked when horns of the moon point downward, as the shingles and stakes will then not rise up as they otherwise would. Fences should be made and repaired when the horns of the moon point upward, as fences then will not sink into the ground. All sorts of trees should be grafted and pruned during the increase in the moon's light. Timber cut when the moon is full or rapidly increasing in her light will be full of sap, soft and spongy, and will not last, as it will soon become worm-eaten or destroyed by rot. Timber cut when the moon is dark or during the decrease of its light in the month of February will be durable."

The superstitions of which the foregoing are typical are more or less seriously believed in and followed by a considerable number of countrymen everywhere. Farming is carried on "in the

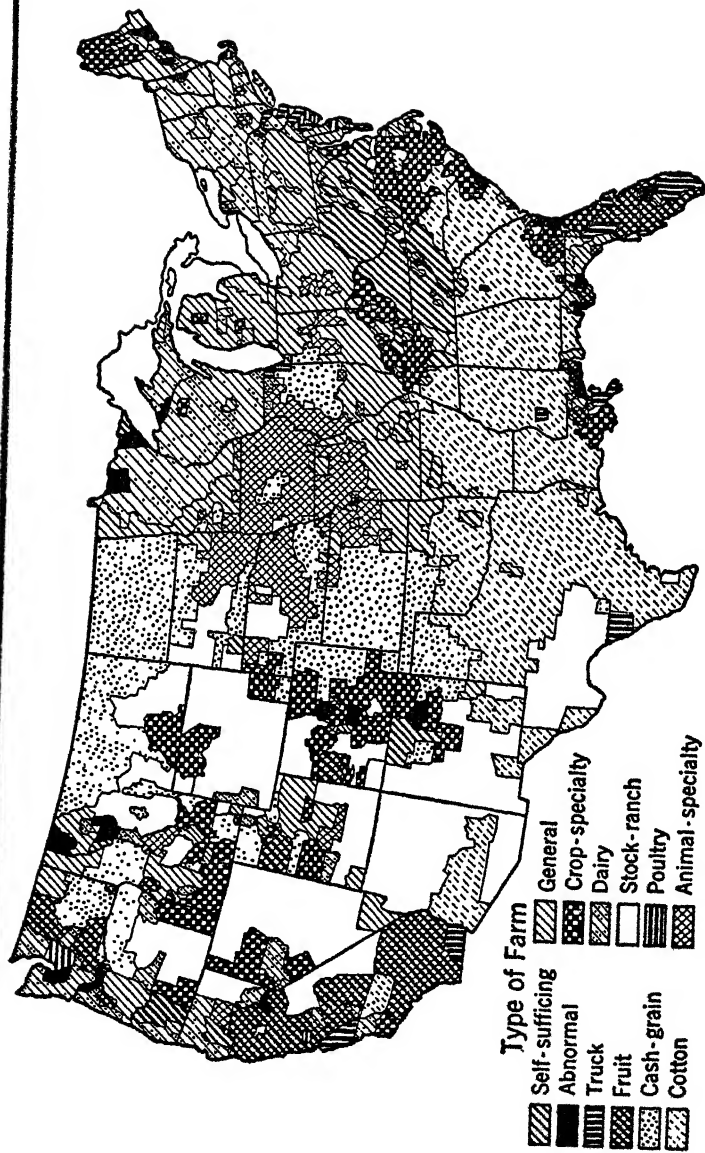
moon" and by the signs of the zodiac to a greater degree than is often appreciated.

2. *The second level* of the self-maintenance mores, which I have designated the practical, concerns the great bulk of agricultural customs and practices. They are the ways that have been evolved and adapted to circumstances in the hard school of every day life. Repeatedly tested and found safe, the farmer clings tenaciously to them and is loath to try new ones. That which "is customary" holds sway over the rank and file. In any particular type of farming there is considerable variation in the practices followed from section to section. In the corn belt, for instance, toward its eastward limits the corn is cut, shucked, and subsequently husked, while toward the westward limits it is shucked from the standing stalk. So in many particulars is there variation in the technique. And yet what is more noteworthy is the uniformity of ways in general among farmers.

3. *The third or scientific level* of tradition is the new and rational method. This portion of the tradition is growing. It is being wrought out by experimentation and research in the agricultural colleges and experiment stations, and is being passed on to the farmers. However, as yet the growing surface of the maintenance mores is but a thin coating over the mountain of static custom. Only the few have so far entered into the new and better heritage. Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated that the American farmer is capable of becoming a scientific farmer, that he can effect alteration and improvement in his ways. In truth, it is apparent that in the last analysis he will respond to change as readily as any other occupational class. There is already a wide-spread beginning of scientific agriculture in the fact that there are Farm Bureau agents in almost every county of America. These highly trained experts are giving advice and instruction on every phase of the agricultural process to an increasing number of farmers. Thus a new type of farmer is arising.

The fact, however, that the farmer's technique has to do with the manipulation of nature, which brooks no radical departures from its wonted ways, makes the traditions of husbandry rather more immutable than those of any other art.

Everything considered, the technique of American agriculture



59. Type of Farming Region, Based on Dominant Number of Farms of a Given Type, 1930

Source: *Fifteenth Census, Agriculture*, Vol. III, p. 10.

has been reasonably well adapted to the environment, for it has given a relatively large yield.

Taking 1,000 as the basis of productivity for each American dependent upon agriculture, including all persons gainfully employed in agriculture as well as all those dependent upon them, the following tables have been compiled.

Table 45

INDEX OF PRODUCTIVITY OF AMERICAN FARMERS

For each American dependent upon agriculture ..	1,000	100%
For each German dependent upon agriculture	685	68%
For each Briton dependent upon agriculture	425	42%
For each Frenchman dependent upon agriculture ..	406	40%
For each Italian dependent upon agriculture	230	23%

^a Butterfield, K. L., *The Farmer and the New Day*, pp. 9, 10. Copyright by The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1919. Used by permission.

The table only shows that the American farmer supports more unemployed dependents than do farmers elsewhere. This also signifies a relatively high economic level compared with much of the Old World.

When the index of productivity for each person engaged in agriculture is taken, we get the results in the succeeding table:

Table 46

INDEX OF PRODUCTIVITY PER PERSON ^a

For each American engaged in agriculture	292
For each Briton engaged in agriculture	126
For each German engaged in agriculture	119
For each Frenchman engaged in agriculture	90
For each Italian engaged in agriculture	45

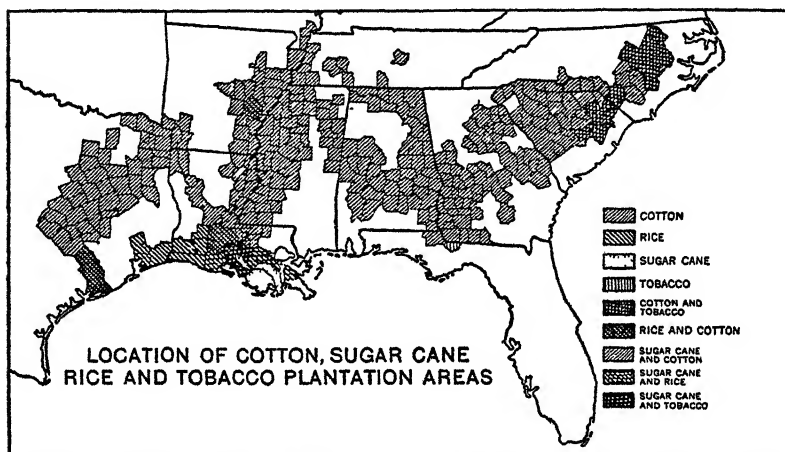
^a *Ibid.*

Interpreted, this means the volume of productivity of each American engaged in agriculture is about 2½ times that of the English agriculturist, nearly 3 times that of the German farmer, and 6 times that of the Italian. The facts are that "in no age of his-

tory and in no country has there been nor is there now" the equal of the American farmer in the matter of quantity of production.

The Land System

So much for the body of tradition in general. Some of the specific customs embodied therein merit attention. Foremost among them is the land system. The practice of utilizing much land, i. e.,



60. Plantation Areas

Source: C. O. Brannen, "Relation of Land Tenure to Plantation Organization," United States Department of Agriculture, *Department Bulletin No. 1269*, p. 3.

Plantations occupy an important part of the farming area in 9 States, while a few plantations are found in 3 other States. Cotton plantations are found in all States where plantation farming is followed, while sugar cane, rice, and tobacco plantations are confined to limited areas where soil and climate are especially suitable to the production of these crops.

extensive rather than intensive cultivation, prevails. In 1930 the average size of farms in the United States was 156.9 acres in contrast to a very few acres in most of Europe.

In Table 47 the averages for the several sections appear.

By size of farms is meant units of operation rather than the amount of land owned or controlled by the individual farmer. The

averages given in the table do not reveal much concerning the differences that prevail in the system of management in the several sections of the country. The large ranches of the West and Northwest and the plantations of the South represent types of farming where extensive areas are under the control of one man or a corporation. The Southern plantation is usually broken up into small units for the purpose of cultivation. The small unit system of tenant farming on these plantations accounts for the small average size given in the table.

Table 47

AVERAGE ACREAGE OF ALL FARM LAND PER FARM
FOR CENSUS PERIODS 1930 AND 1920

Geographical Division	1930	1920
United States	156.9	148.2
New England	114.3	108.2
Middle Atlantic	98.0	95.4
East North Central	114.7	108.5
West North Central	238.6	234.3
South Atlantic	81.6	84.4
East South Central	68.6	75.0
West South Central	166.7	174.1
Mountain	652.5	480.7
Pacific	231.2	239.8

There are two tendencies relative to the size of farms; one is toward the increase of very small ones, and the other toward the increase of those over 500 acres. In 1930 about 37 per cent of the 6,280,600 farms were under 50 acres, with 14.6 per cent under 20 acres. According to the 1935 Agricultural Census, the latter constituted 18.3 of the 6,812,000 farms, having increased by 53 per cent in five years. They have increased steadily ever since 1890, and especially since the depression. In the Southern Appalachian Highlands and in the environs of industrial cities elsewhere small farms are most numerous. They constitute the bulk of the *self-sufficient* and *part-time farms* of the nation, the first type being those on which more of the products are consumed than sold, and

the second type being those whose operators spend some time at non-agricultural work.

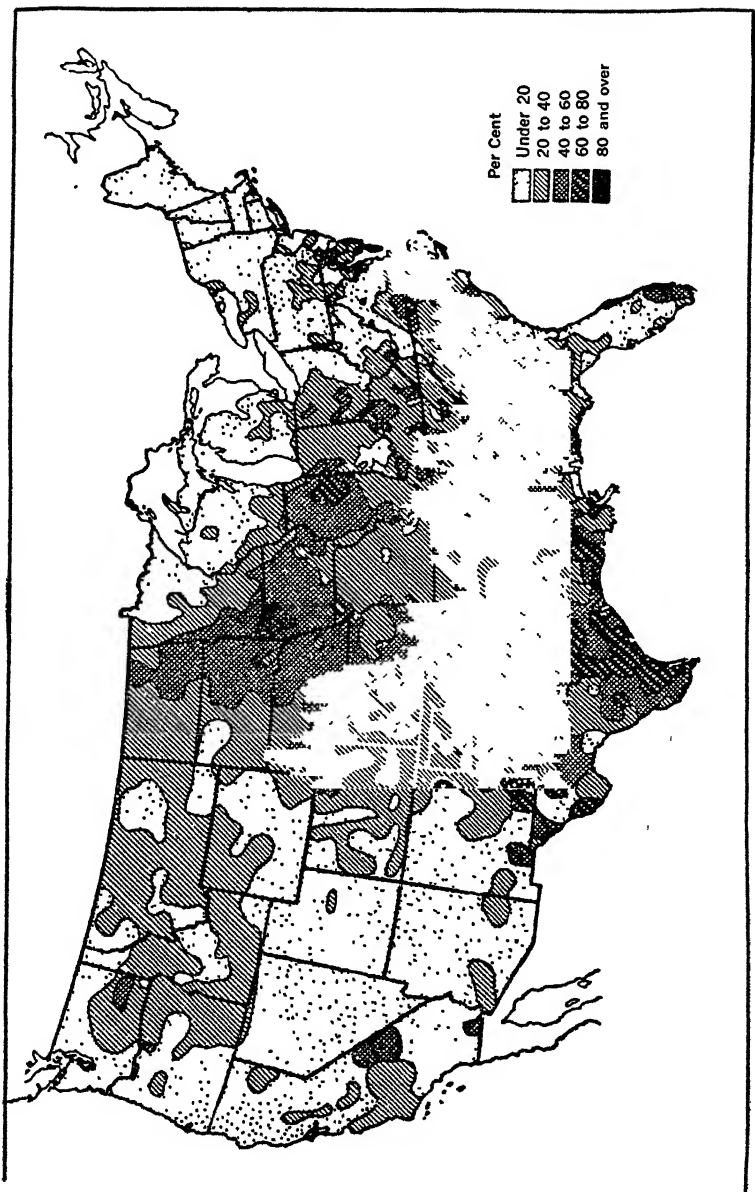
The increase of large farms has been quite as steady as that of small ones, altho the total number is small and the per cent of gain has not been great. In 1930 they were 3.8 per cent of all and embraced 39 per cent of the acreage. Large land units are associated with three kinds of farms, viz.: *private commercial farms*, *corporate farms*, and *coöperative farms*. The first and largest group, including some 22,000 Southern plantations besides larger estates elsewhere, are operated either by tenants with no great amount of capital, or in case of the Western ranches, with much machinery and hired labor. The corporate farms, as the name implies, are company enterprises operated like factories by hired management and labor wholly for gain on the capital invested. Coöperative farms are very rare and are of recent development among sharecroppers. They are joint enterprises of a group of families.

Large-scale farms, especially of the corporate type, are viewed with misgiving by the *family farm class*, for they represent the most extreme form of agricultural commercialization and industrialization. They definitely proletarianize the farm workers and destroy the traditional rural community wherever they are numerous, as, for instance, in California.

The growth of farms at the extremes has naturally been at the expense of the middle-sized, or *family farm* type, which make up nearly 60 per cent of all. They are the farms cultivated by the operator and his family and represent the mode-of-living agriculture so characteristic of America.

Farm Tenantry

The tradition respecting land tenure is another distinctive feature of American rural culture. Independent ownership has always been the chief mode of holding farms here. However, tenancy had become a conspicuous feature by the last quarter of the 19th Century and has since continued to grow in volume. From Figure 70 it



61. Percentage of All Farmers Who Were Tenants Apr. 1, 1930

Source: *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1932, p. 493.

will be seen that two areas of high tenancy exist; one in the South, sweeping like a crescent round from Virginia to Oklahoma; the other in the northern Corn Belt states. In these two areas are concentrated over half the farm tenants.

From 25.6 per cent of tenantry in 1880 the figures rose to 42.4 per cent in 1930 and stood at 42.1 per cent in 1935. The increase has not been uniform thruout the country. Since 1920 it has been steady in the two highest areas. In the Mountain States of the West, due to the growth of large-scale production, a notable increase has occurred. On the Atlantic seaboard from Virginia northward and on the Pacific coast it has declined.

The rapid rise of farm tenancy to such heights in a country where a vast public domain was so recently available for free settlement and where the ratio of population to land has remained low seems anomalous. However, it is accounted for partly by the exhaustion of free land for homesteading and the subsequent rise in land values due to commercial speculation. With this the growth of tenancy was directly correlated, since the price of farm products and the wages of farm labor did not rise *pari passu* with the land. Thus it became increasingly difficult for the impecunious man to buy and pay for a farm. Some evidence of this is seen in the fact that the best and highest price land areas of the North developed the most tenancy found anywhere in that section. Cases in point are the best land areas of Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and other states.⁵

In the South a great factor was the emancipation of the slaves, which left the plantation owner impoverished and the Negro with only his labor power. This led to an arrangement for the employment of labor without money wages and the cultivation of the land without money rent. Thus the share rent and crop lien system arose and evolved into an extensive tenant system. Today in the Cotton Belt, as a general rule, the greater the Negro population, the greater the amount of tenancy.

There are numerous other factors, both general and local, that have contributed to the growth of tenancy, among them the agricultural depression beginning in 1920. As a result of it there was

⁵ B. H. Hibbard, "Farm Tenancy in the United States," *Annals*, 40:29-39.

Table 48

NUMBER OF FARMS HELD UNDER VARIOUS KINDS OF TENURE BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION IN 1930

Geographic Division	Total No. of Farms	Operated by Owners	Operated by Tenants	NUMBER UNDER VARIOUS KINDS OF TENANCY			Manager
				Cash	Other Tenants	Croppers	
United States	6,288,648	3,568,394	2,664,365	489,210	1,398,877	776,278	55,889
New England	124,925	114,104	7,885	5,338	2,547	.....	2,936
Middle Atlantic	357,603	299,095	52,455	26,875	31,580	.....	6,053
East North Central	966,502	693,892	263,977	62,846	201,131	.....	8,633
West North Central	1,112,755	661,115	444,169	121,600	322,569	.....	7,471
South Atlantic	1,058,468	539,930	509,574	78,799	186,117	244,658	8,964
East South Central	1,062,214	465,348	593,978	96,914	216,083	280,981	2,888
West South Central	1,103,134	410,397	687,231	62,319	374,273	250,939	5,506
Mountain	241,314	178,898	58,266	15,712	43,114	.....	3,590
Pacific	261,733	205,615	46,270	24,807	21,463	.....	9,848

In all the States north of North Carolina and east of Ohio and Kentucky the percentages of farms operated by tenants were smaller in 1930 than in 1880. In most of these States the maximum percentages were attained about 1900. In Kentucky and Tennessee there was little change in 1910 and 1920, but some increase by 1930. In the other Southern states, except Louisiana, the increase in the percentage of farms operated by tenants continued up to 1910. In the next decade the increase was less marked in some of the States of this group, while in others a decrease occurred. In the decade 1920-1930 most of the States increased. In most of the newly developed States of the West, except the Pacific division, where there was a decrease from 1920-1930, the increase of tenancy, which normally has followed the early years of settlement, was still continuing in 1930. The increase has also been marked in the Mountain division.

wholesale foreclosure of farm mortgages. Thus many farms fell to financial corporations, and tenants or hired laborers succeeded owner-operators.

One principle seems to hold between the nature of the land and the rate of tenancy. It is that the rate is high on lands that can support both tenants and absentee owners and low on lands that are not fertile enough to support more than an operator.

Types of Tenantry in Different Sections

The wide difference in the amount and type of tenantry in the various geographical sections is significant. The data are given in Tables 48 and 49.

Table 49

PER CENT OF TENANCY BY GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS, 1930

Geographical Division	Per Cent of All Farms Operated by Tenants
United States	42.4
New England	6.3
Middle Atlantic	14.7
East North Central	27.3
West North Central	39.9
South Atlantic	48.1
East South Central	55.9
West South Central	62.3
Mountain	24.4
Pacific	17.7

The various types of farm tenancy call for definition. *Share tenants* are those who pay a certain share of the products, as one-half, one-third, or one-quarter, for the use of the farm, but furnish their own work animals. *Share cash tenants* are those who pay a share of the products for a part of the land and cash for a part. *Cash tenants* are those who pay a cash rental, as \$7 per acre of crop land or \$500 for the use of the whole farm. *Standing renters* are those

who pay a stated amount of farm products for the use of the farm, as 3 bales of cotton or 500 bushels of corn. *Croppers* are share tenants whose work animals and everything else are furnished by their landlords. Standing renters and croppers are types that are of importance only in the Southern States.⁶

Most of the tenantry is a short-term share or cash rent arrangement between owner and operator. Insecurity of tenure, leading to constant shifting and soil depletion, is a well known feature of the system. The census reports furnish data which reveal to some extent this insecurity.

By consulting Table 50 it will be seen that a fourth or more of the farm operators have been on the same farm for only one year or less. The worst conditions as regards length of tenure are found in the South.

Table 50

FARM OPERATORS BY NUMBER OF YEARS ON FARM, 1910-1935

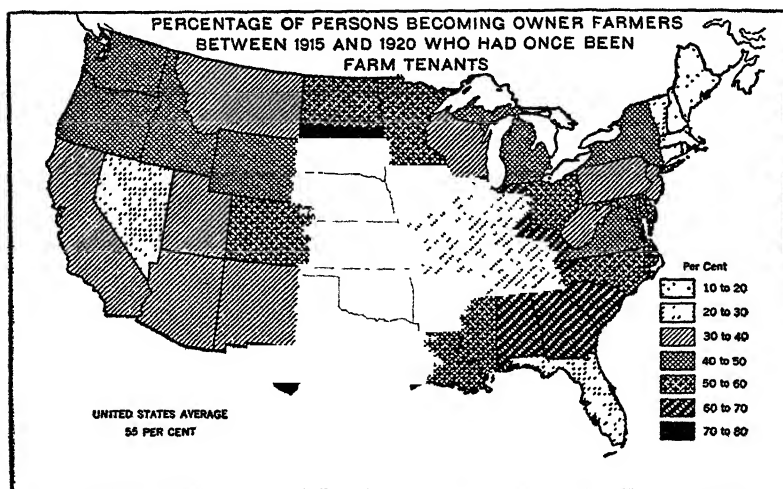
Number of Years on Farm	Number of Farm Operators			Per Cent Distribution		
	1910	1920	1935	1910	1920	1935
Total operators ...	6,361,502	6,448,343	6,812,000	....	....	.. .
Reporting years on farm	5,794,768	6,227,539	5,953,952	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than one year ..	1,000,293	660,713	1,151,896	17.3	10.6	26.9
1 year	627,860	898,019	491,255	10.8	14.4	16.0
2 to 4 years	1,371,607	1,397,958	1,092,847	23.7	22.4	20.3
5 years and over ...	2,795,008	3,270,849	3,217,954	48.2	52.5	42.8
Not reporting years on farm	566,734	220,804	858,048	....	.. .	....

Tenantry, as we have seen, is of several types. In the North and West share tenantry and cash rental and a combination of the two are in force. In these sections the renter generally has capital. He has gradually climbed and is still more likely to climb the ladder to ownership than in other sections. As shown by the census, a large portion of the tenants of the North are relatives of their landlords.

⁶ E. C. Goldenweiser and Leon E. Truesdell, "Farm Tenancy in the United States," *Census Monographs*, IV, p. 119.

The Fifteenth Census gathered data for the first time on the relation of tenants and landlords. For all classes of tenants some 19.2 per cent were related to their landlords. For cash tenants it varied from 29.4 per cent in the North thru 13.0 per cent in the West to 12.0 per cent in the South. In the case of all other tenants the range was from 29.7 per cent in the North thru 19.5 per cent in the West to 15.2 per cent in the South.

In some areas, as for instance in Nebraska, 44.6 per cent of the tenants were related to the landlords. Nearly three-fourths of all landlords were the fathers, fathers-in-law or mothers of the tenants.



62. Percentage of Persons Becoming Owner Farmers Between 1915 and 1920 Who Had Once Been Tenants

Source: L. C. Gray, Charles L. Stewart, Howard A. Turner, J. T. Sanders, and W. J. Spillman, "Farm Ownership and Tenancy" *Yearbook U. S. Department of Agriculture*, 1923, p. 556.

The percentage of owner farmers who had once been farm tenants is lowest in New England, only 15 per cent, and reaches a maximum, about 75 per cent, in the tier of States from South Dakota to Texas, inclusive, and in Iowa and Arkansas. In practically all the other States of the Middle West, as well as in the South, half or more of the owner farmers had once been tenants. Probably migration of tenant farmers to regions where farms were to be obtained at comparatively low prices has been a factor in causing high percentages in the tier of States from the Dakotas to Texas.

"The fact that so great a majority of related landlords are fathers, fathers-in-law or mothers of tenants makes it highly probable that in such cases the tenant or his wife will own the farm eventually and that during the period before ownership the tenant will enjoy most of the advantages of tenancy with few of the disadvantages often charged against it."⁷ It is the tenant who is in no wise related to his landlord who often struggles under a hard system. As land

Table 51

PER CENT OF TENANTS RELATED TO LANDLORDS,
BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS, 1930^a

Geographic Division	PER CENT OF TENANTS OF VARIOUS CLASSES	
	Cash Tenants	All Other Tenants
United States	19.6	19.1
New England	25.9	30.2
Middle Atlantic	27.3	29.8
East North Central	30.3	30.4
West North Central	29.4	29.1
South Atlantic	14.5	14.1
East South Central	10.7	15.7
West South Central	11.0	15.7
Mountain	13.5	18.7
Pacific	12.7	21.2

^a *Fifteenth Census.*

values mount up or prices of farm produce fall, his climb toward ownership becomes more prolonged and difficult. This has been shown by the studies of W. J. Spillman, who two decades ago pointed out that those who achieved ownership 31 to 40 years before had spent on the average 10.1 years as laborers and tenants, whereas three or four decades later it took 8.9 years longer, or 19 years, to negotiate these stages.⁸

⁷ J. O. Rankin, "The Nebraska Farm Family," University of Nebraska Experiment Station *Bulletin No. 185*, February, 1923, p. 5.

⁸ W. J. Spillman, "The Agricultural Ladder," *American Economic Review*, March, 1919, pp. 29-38.

Another more thoro study of the question did not throw doubt upon the fact that it took longer in 1915-1920 than formerly to climb the agricultural ladder from laborer, thru tenantry, to full ownership, but it did raise the question whether the retarded process meant harder conditions and an increasing amount of permanent tenancy or not.⁹

It was suggested that the fact that the average value of the farms acquired had increased over previous decades would account for a slowing up in the climb of the ladder. This might not indicate worsening conditions. Thus, if it took an average of 15 years to become an owner when the average price of a farm was \$10,000, and 20 years when the price had risen to \$20,000, the change would not necessarily mean decreasing opportunity.¹⁰ After using various methods to calculate the relation between the several factors involved in the data, these investigators were unwilling to interpret the meaning of the protracted preownership period.

In spite of all that has happened since 1920, the agricultural ladder still exists. A study by Black and Allen demonstrates that it is being climbed about as rapidly now as in the past. However, it is more difficult for young men to get started as tenants.¹¹

It is not to be assumed that all must climb the ladder. The study made by Gray and others revealed the fact that 42 per cent of the owners had never been wage hands or tenants. About a fourth of the owners reported experience as tenants only, and a fifth as both tenants and laborers, 45 per cent having thus passed thru the tenant stage.¹²

Recent studies of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt conditions show that more frequently in the South than in the North white owners began their farming careers as owners. Only about one-half of the Southern White owners have climbed from a lower tenure status to ownership; whereas about four out of five Southern Negro and

⁹ L. C. Gray and others, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ L. C. Gray, Charles L. Stewart, Howard A. Turner, J. T. Sanders, and W. J. Spillman, *op. cit.*, p. 558.

¹¹ J. D. Black and R. H. Allen, "The Growth of Farm Tenancy in the United States," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May, 1937.

¹² Gray and others, *op. cit.*, p. 554.

Northern White owners have climbed the ladder to their present position. This means that there are over two white land owners in the South who began farming as such for every one among Southern Negroes or Northern Whites who began at the top rung. Further, it appears that over one-half of the present renters in the North have climbed up from laborers. In the South an even larger percentage of the Negro renters have risen from a lower status,

Table 52

AVERAGE VALUE OF FARM PROPERTY, OR THE AMOUNT OF CAPITAL NEEDED TO PURCHASE AND EQUIP A FARM AT VARIOUS CENSUS PERIODS ^a

Geographic Division	Value of Farm Units				
	1930	1920	1900	1870	1850
United States	\$ 9,103	\$12,084	\$3,563	\$3,363	\$2,596
New England	9,256	7,492	3,333	3,135	2,596
Middle Atlantic	10,074	9,290	4,759	5,657	3,880
East North Central ..	11,501	15,898	5,004	4,057	2,189
West North Central ..	16,308	25,517	5,488	2,802	1,568
South Atlantic	4,224	5,292	1,511	1,980	2,845
East South Central ..	3,039	4,203	1,324	1,897	2,211
West South Central ..	6,222	7,652	2,146	1,449	3,485
Mountain	13,518	16,727	5,934	1,421	892
Pacific	20,629	22,664	7,864	6,428	6,010

^a *Fifteenth Census.*

but only about one-third of the White renters have done so. In the South less than one-sixth of either White or Negro croppers have risen from laborers.

It is sometimes assumed that all climb somewhere up the ladder and hold the position attained, but it appears that a considerable number climb and fall back. This is true of white farm laborers both in the North and in the South. It is reported that 14 per cent of all Northern farmers, 18 per cent of all Southern White and 22 per cent of all Negro farmers have suffered one or more falls to a lower status.¹³

It is apparent that the chances of successfully climbing the ladder are fewer in the South than in the North and West. As the report

¹³ E. A. Schuler, "Social Status and Farm Tenure Attitudes and Social Conditions of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt Farmers," U.S.D.A., *Social Research Report No. IV*, April, 1938, pp. 106-109.

just referred to indicates, the state of tenantry grows steadily worse from the Northern to the Southern White and finally to the Negro. The two important classes in the South are renters and croppers, with these divided again into Whites and Negroes. The renter gets land for cost or on shares on a one-year, unwritten contract. He has some capital and "runs himself," as the saying is. About two-thirds of the farm tenants of the Southern States are renters.

Renters are the "upper crust" of the tenant class, ranking next to the land-owners in economic and social standing. They have more or less personal property, and the hope of land-ownership before them. In the South, less than half as many white renters as in the North are on family land, but these may be called "apprentices who look to owning land by gift, heritage, marriage or easy purchase." "Kith and kin relationships are now and have always been the South's main reliance for increasing the number of land-owning farmers and for a stable agriculture based on ownership." Those not on family land are not born to land ownerships. If they ever acquire any, it will be by a very long hard struggle.¹⁴

The croppers constitute over 43 per cent of all tenants in the South. One-fourth of the white tenants fall in this class. The total number of croppers reported by the 1930 census in 16 Southern States was 776,278. In Southern jargon, a cropper means one who is "run by the landlord." "He owns little or nothing but the simple things in and around his cabin. Everything is furnished by the landlord—land, dwellings, firewood, work stock, implements, and from time to time small advances of money and pantry supplies to help him produce the crops. He pays half the fertilizer bill and gets half the corn and cash crop money. Everything else except the cotton seed is his. Against the cropper's half of the crop money, the landlord charges the cropper's debts for advances and the cropper's share of the fertilizer bills. Croppers are 'havers' (halfers) as the phrase goes, with little or nothing to invest in farming, except the bare labor of themselves and their families."¹⁵

¹⁴ E. C. Branson, "Farm Tenantry in the Cotton Belt; How Farm Tenants Live," *Journal of Social Forces*, March, 1923, pp. 450-451.

¹⁵ J. A. Dickey and E. C. Branson, "How Farm Tenants Live," University of No. Carolina, *Ext. Bull.*, Nov. 16, 1922, pp. 13, 14.

In the working of the system the cropper fares ill. When the crop is sold the landlord takes all that is coming to him first and the cropper gets what is left. In good years the cropper may get \$100 to \$150 in cash, but often nothing at all. There may even be an unpaid debt owing the landlord. In such cases the cropper is bound by iron-clad custom to work another year for the landlord in order to pay out. Thus, the cropper's lot is often wretched and hopeless. He becomes shiftless and unambitious, for no prospect of acquiring land of his own awaits him. This class shift yearly from one farm to another and live in a state of "villeinage that begins to approach the Sixteenth Century type."¹⁶ This state in many cases is found in a large part of Spanish America, where the *dependientes* on the *haciendas* are in virtual serfdom. So deplorable is it that one has called the cropper "the man whom God forgot."

Under this feudal or semi-feudal system the Negro tenants are often exploited in a merciless manner. Many are ignorant, irresponsible, thriftless and inefficient. The planters have in consequence adopted very exacting methods which in the hands of the unscrupulous lead to all sorts of abuses. These methods have generally been legalized. The unjust practices that arise out of the situation are vividly described by Ray Stannard Baker in his book *Following the Color Line*. Baker says: "When the Negro tenant takes up land or hires out to the landlord, he ordinarily signs a contract, or if he cannot sign (about half the Negro tenants of the black belt are wholly illiterate) he makes his mark. He often has no way of knowing, certainly, what is in the contract, though the arrangement is usually clearly understood, and he must depend on the landlord to keep both the rent and the supply store accounts. In other words, he is wholly at the planter's mercy—a temptation as dangerous for the landlord as the possibilities which it presents are for the tenant. It is so easy to make large profits by charging immense interest percentages or outrageous prices for supplies to tenants who are too ignorant or weak to protect themselves that the stories of the oppressive landlord in the South are scarcely surprising. It is easy, when the tenant brings in his cotton in the fall

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, *Journal of Soc. Forces*, Mar., 1923, p. 213.

not only to underweigh it, but to credit it at the lowest prices of the week, and this dealing of the strong with the weak is not Southern, it is human. Such a system has encouraged dishonesty and wastefulness; it has made many landlords cruel and greedy; it has increased the helplessness of the Negro. In many cases it has meant downright degeneration, not only to the Negro, but to the white man. These are strong words, but no one can travel in the black belt without seeing enough to convince him of the terrible consequences growing out of these relationships."¹⁷

It is obvious that there is a world of difference between tenantry in the North and South. In the North the tenant operates the farm with almost as much freedom as tho he were owner. The relationship between himself and the landlord is one of partnership. He is a small capitalist. Field studies some years ago in Chester County, Pennsylvania, revealed a fifth of the tenants with capital ranging from \$3,000 to \$9,000, while in Iowa not a few were found with as much as \$20,000 to \$60,000 worth of property.¹⁸ In the South the tenant is a dependent, sometimes practically a peon. The relationship between himself and the landlord is that of servant and master. Relatively few have any capital to speak of. The planter and the storekeeper dominate this class, whether white or Negro, much as the plantation owners ruled in the days of slavery. However, signs of revolt are at hand among that half of farm tenants who are struggling against every disadvantage. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union has been organized and become established, representing the first successful union of agricultural workers in the South. Backed by the C.I.O., it may eventually evolve into a powerful agency to gain better conditions for this class.

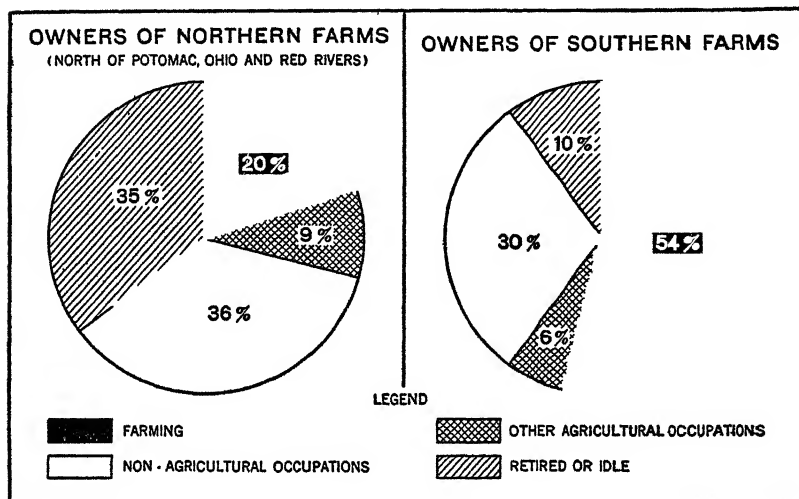
Tenantry Situation Summarized

Tenantry in America is generally looked upon as a stage in the process of acquiring ownership. If it be this and if the acquisition

¹⁷ Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line*, p. 94. By permission of the publishers, Doubleday, Page & Co.

¹⁸ W. B. Bizzell, "Farm Tenantry in the United States," Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, A. and M. College, *Bull. No. 278*, pp. 139-143.

of ownership is not too difficult or too long delayed, tenantry may not be disadvantageous or undesirable. But it is clear that for many in the South at least it leads to no ownership. And in the North ownership is being reached with increasing difficulty. The retardation of the transition process has been manifest for three to four decades. The result has been a constantly increasing percentage of



63. Occupations of Landlords of Rented Farms

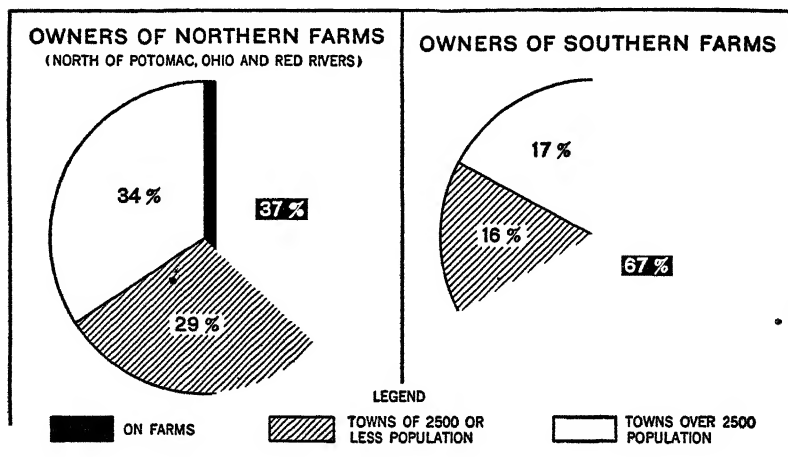
Source: L. C. Gray and others, *op. cit.*

The proportion of landlords still classed as farmers is much larger in the South than in the North, but if retired farmers, many of whom exercise supervision over their rented farms, are considered farmers, the difference is not so great. About a third of the farm landlords of the two regions appear to be engaged in non-agricultural occupations. This figure is based on reports from 23,000 landlords.

tenantry. And the question has arisen, How far is America going to have a permanent class of land tenants ruled by an aristocracy of absentee landlords? If to any great extent we are to have such a system, it will mean a vastly different rural society from that which has prevailed.

The future of family farming for commercial purposes is problematical. The Industrial Revolution with its technology, speciali-

zation, and rationalization has overtaken agriculture. Large-scale farming is the result. In 1930, 9,618 corporations were engaged in agriculture, whereas there were but 6,779 in 1918. Six to seven per cent of the total farm income goes to them. Moreover, since 1930 a considerable amount of land has fallen into the hands of banks, insurance companies, and other corporate agencies thru mort-



64. Place of Residence of Landlords of Rented Farms

Source: *Ibid.*

In the Northern states more than a third of the landlords reside on farms, while in the South the proportion is more than two-thirds. In the North about half of the landlords living in cities and villages are retired farmers. The graph is based on returns from 23,000 landlords in 24 states to a special inquiry made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Division of Land Economics.

gage foreclosures. Thus it is probable that a great many more corporations are engaged in agriculture than in 1930.

Can family farming survive this competition or will it fail? If it fails, more and more farmers will be driven into tenancy or will become agricultural laborers. However, it is possible that coöperative farming may arise to counter this new industrial agriculture and save the country for those who dwell upon the soil.

The Effects of Tenantry

The harmful effects of tenantry are already seriously felt in much of the country. With its rise the rural community has undergone profound change. We may direct attention to the effects that are most common. On the *economic side* there are three or four evil results and no good ones to offset them unless, as already said, landownership follows. These evil results are:

(1) Soil mining. This has long been recognized. John Stuart Mill called attention to it in his day. He quotes a contemporary to the effect that if a man securely possesses a bleak rock, he will turn it into a garden but if he leases a garden he will convert it into a desert.¹⁹ Evidence of such consequences are frequently seen under our short-term lease system.

(2) Methods of production not based on scientific knowledge, giving poor returns. This is particularly the case where tenants are transients.

(3) Low labor income and low standards of living for the tenant follow as a consequence. The tenant's income is often kept low because of inadequate land, capital and credit. In the 16 Southern states the average tenant's farm is barely half the size of the average owner operator's. He has little capital and gets meager returns. The aim of the system centers in yield per acre, not in yield and value of income per worker. In the North it is much better and consequently the tenant fares better.

(4) Increasing land monopoly. The low income of tenants and thirty years of rising land values on account of speculation tended to develop a permanent land owning class and a permanent tenant class.

The social effects of extensive tenantry, many of which are largely the consequences of economic effect, are still more significant. Some of these are as follows:

(1) Population instability. Transient tenants mean an unsettled, discontented people. The shifting of population has been accelerated with the growth of tenantry everywhere in America.

¹⁹ Ashley, Ed., *Principles of Political Economy*, Chap. 7, p. 282.

(2) Institutional instability. There can be no permanency of institutions if the people are only transient. Schools, church and community organizations have suffered wherever tenantry has been extensive. Compared with high ownership communities, high tenantry communities show low organization membership.

(3) Cultural decline. Indifference to schooling and neglect of educational opportunity for their children is common among tenants. There is a like neglect of church and moral standards. Lack of a permanent stake in the land or in the institutions of the community is responsible for this.

(4) Social stratification. The rise of class discrimination and a consciousness of difference between owners and tenants appears. In the South this is marked. In the North it is less pronounced but by no means absent.

(5) Community decay. The existence of community requires relatively stable population, culture, and institutions, along with social homogeneity. Tenantry destroys these and the community breaks down.

If tenantry were to become a fixed estate, some of the effects which are due to impermanency would disappear, but we should thus have a peasantry as in some feudal European countries.

Remedial Measures

The Special Committee on Farm Tenancy in its report to Congress in 1937 made the following recommendations for improving the tenant's status: ²⁰

1. Written leases terminable only on 6 months notice by either party.

2. Landlords to allow tenants to remove improvements they have made and to compensate them for unexhausted improvements at end of lease.

3. Tenants to compensate landlords for damages due to tenants' neglect and landlords to have power to prevent continuance of wastage.

²⁰ *Farm Tenancy*, House Document No. 149, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 1937, p. 20.

4. Full records to be kept of expenditures on which either party has a claim.

5. If lease is terminated by either party without due cause after one year, the other party shall be paid for losses.

6. Landlord's lien shall be limited in case of failure of crops or prices if rentals are not on a sliding scale.

7. Renting dwellings that do not meet minimum housing and sanitary standards, such as sanitary toilets, screens, tight roofs, and reasonable stipulations shall be a misdemeanor.

8. Differences between landlords and tenants shall be settled by local boards of arbitration composed of disinterested landlords and tenants whose decisions shall be subject to court review where considerable sums of money or legal interpretations are involved.

These provisions, if enacted into law in the several states, would mitigate some of the evils of tenantry, but they would not check its growth. Other measures are needed to do this, some of which may be mentioned:

1. The taxation of land values so as to discourage large farm holdings and encourage home ownership is one. A graduated land tax would do this.

2. Rural credit.²¹ Much progress has been made in this direction in the last twenty years by various Acts of Congress designed to make money available at reasonable interest rates for the purchase of farms. The latest of these Acts is that of 1937, known as the Bankhead-Jones Act. This law is definitely designed to check the growth of tenantry. With two out of every five farmers already tenants and their numbers increasing at the rate of 40,000 per year, Congress squarely faced the issue by giving to the Farm Security Administration \$10,000,000 for 1937-38, another \$25,000,000 for 1938-39, and \$40,000,000 for 1939-40 for loans to landless men who wish to buy farms. Up to the middle of the third year \$38,000,000 had been loaned to tenant families for the purchase of 7,068 farms in 1,300 counties. By 1940 there will be 13,250 farmers thus established on their own land. The loans are made for 40 years at 3 per cent interest and the principle is amortized at the rate of 4.3 per

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

cent each year. Altho the number of tenants that can be aided in this way is insignificant, the method is commendable and promising.²²

3. Land settlement policies.²³ Upon such a program the nation has been definitely launched by the New Deal. If continued and amplified under the Farm Security Administration as it is now trending, this program should tend somewhat to discourage tenantry as the means to land-ownership and should do it without much added burden to the taxpayers.

4. State land commissions. There is need for such agencies to aid and protect the prospective purchaser from fraud. Some states have made a beginning in this.²⁴ Wisconsin has a state real-estate brokers' board.²⁵ Maryland through her agricultural college has worked out a plan for a Public Land Exchange.²⁶

5. Reform of land transfer system. Our complicated and costly system of land record and transfer which is generally in force needs to be simplified. The Torrens system offers a solution.²⁷

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²² *The Agricultural Situation*, October, 1939, pp. 16-18.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

²⁵ P. A. Speck, *A Stake in the Land*, Chap. 7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Debate the question: Large-scale commercial agriculture, being more efficient, is the only defensible type of farming for America.
2. Is capitalistic farming, corporate or coöperative, to be the future type or will the small family-sized farm continue to dominate?
3. What conditions conduce to low and what to high rates of tenancy?
4. Outline a program by which all the millions of farm tenants of America could be made land-owners.
5. How far does landownership or its absence in a farm population influence the nature of society, i. e., institutions, organizations, and community development?
6. What is the difference between the American farmer and the Old World peasant?
7. Why should the family-farm class look upon the development of corporate farming with disfavor?
8. How far have the farmers of your community reached the scientific level in agricultural practices? On what facts do you base your conclusion? How would you promote improvement in methods?

THE PRIMARY TRADITION (Continued)

Farm Work and Labor Customs

HAVING discussed the primary tradition as it relates to the land, we turn now to it in reference to work.

Work customs have undergone change along with the development of tools and machines. There was an age of hand farming, now long past. It was the ancient method of soil tillage handed down to the pioneer farmers of America. The hoe was the chief tool. With it went the scythe, the grain cradle, the ax, the grubbing-hoe, the flail, the hand-rake, and the pitchfork. It was an age of muscular labor. Agriculture was toilsome work in the extreme. The brawny arm was in demand. Labor customs were characterized by considerable exchange of work. The work "bee" was common, since the combination of the muscles of many men was often needed to perform difficult tasks. The time element also played a part, for seedtime and harvest often called for combined effort to secure a crop. The hand-farming age was thus an age of mutual aid.

Hand-farming was succeeded by horse-farming. This came in with the invention of reaping machinery. The mower, reaper, grain drill, wheeled-cultivator, and horse-rake were the great tools that ushered in the period. Horse-power was substituted for human power in much of the work of the farm. Labor came to be organized about teams and machines. Skill with a team became more important than brawny arms. Farm labor became less irksome. Fewer hands were needed to do it, and less mutual aid was required or given.

Now horse-farming is giving way to motor-farming. The power driven machine is doing the work. The tractor is being substituted

for the horse. Mechanical skill and head work are replacing so much handwork. So the old saying that "it takes a man with a strong back and a weak mind to make a good farmer" is being rendered obsolete. Incidentally, new work customs are rising and old ones are being modified under the stimulus of motor-power farming. For instance, the time factor has been changed, as will be seen from the following statement: "When wheat was harvested with a sickle and threshed with a flail, from 35 to 50 hours of labor were required for harvesting and threshing an acre with a yield of 15 bushels; the introduction of the cradle saved about 10 hours per acre. At present farmers in the Great Plains use from 4 to 5 hours in harvesting an acre of wheat with a binder and threshing from stock with a stationary thresher. From 3 to 4 hours are required when the crop is harvested with a header and threshed with a stationary thresher; and an average of three-quarters of an hour is needed when the combined harvester-thresher is used."¹

Despite the application of new forms of energy to the occupation, farming remains a laborious pursuit. Work habits are driving. Hours are long and leisure seasonal. It is difficult for the farm operator to have a fixed working day. The demands of livestock and the fickleness of the weather forestall great regularity and general standardization of working hours. However, the length of the field work day can be roughly stated for various types of farming. In the Cotton Belt and the Corn Belt it will average fully 9 hours, whereas in small-grain and dairy regions it will reach 11 or 12 hours. Certain studies seem to indicate that the day has grown shorter in the northern and eastern states since 1920, but the decline is probably less than 1 hour.²

The use of more machinery on the farm and of labor-saving devices in the home certainly tends to make farm work somewhat less arduous and enslaving. Best of all, more leisure is becoming possible and shorter hours feasible even during the growing season. However, studies of the effect of power machinery indicate that

¹ *United States Daily*, June 12, 1930.

² Hopkins, J. A., and Newman, Wm. A., "Length and Changes in Farm Work-Day," *Report No. 54*, United States Department of Agriculture, January, 1937.

farmers have increased their land area and production instead of their leisure time. They are working just as many hours as twenty years ago.³ Thus it appears that work habits persist under changed conditions.

The irksomeness of farm work, however, is greatly relieved by its variety. Many different tasks are likely to be performed in the course of the day. This lessens the monotony of toil and affords rest thru change. This of course is more true of out-of-door work than of work within the house.

Withal, new standards of labor are rising under the influence of machines. Hence, the human ox is a fallen idol, and the man of wits is being exalted. Hence, also, manual labor is losing something of its prestige on the farms.

The farm family is usually a work unit, and the business a joint family enterprise. Consequently there is relatively little fluctuation from year to year in the productive effort and the work requirement on the average farmstead. Fluctuation in output is normally due to other factors besides labor. It is not the traditional practice to decrease the output in bad times nor yet greatly to increase it in good. Says Friday: "The reason for this failure to reduce production is that the farmer is not only capitalist and entrepreneur but the principal laborer of his own enterprise as well. The additional labor is furnished for the most part by members of his own family. Because of this fact he is in no position to cut down costs by dismissing his labor, as is the manufacturer. He would lose more by reducing production on his individual farm than he could gain by the increase of prices. So agricultural output continues at the full during depression."⁴

It is an old practice among farmers to "exchange work." In the hand-farming days there was a great deal of this. The "bee" for all sorts of work was in vogue. New grounds were "logged," barns and houses were "raised," corn husked, wood cut, roads built, quilting and sewing done, apples pared, and various other tasks accom-

³ D. R. Mitchell, "The Long Work Day Continues," *Rural America*, April, 1931, pp. 6-7.

⁴ David Friday, *Papers and Proceedings of American Economic Association*, *Am. Econ. Rev.*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, p. 151.

plished by neighborhood groups working together. These mutual aid customs have grown less necessary and less prevalent as labor saving devices have been introduced. Much of such work can now be done more easily than by the old "bee."

There is still some mutual aid practiced in harvesting and threshing in many sections. Where it is a custom to kill meat, "butcher-

Table 53

EXCHANGE OF WORK AMONG FARMERS OF NORTH CAROLINA ^a

	Per Cent of Families Exchanging Work	Average Days Exchanged per Family for the Year Studied
Operator landlords		
White	34.9	5.5
Black	45.5	11.2
Owner operators		
White	49.8	4.84
Black	41.8	3.95
Tenants		
White	62.3	11.85
Black	46.2	4.55
Croppers		
White	67.0	14.2
Black	68.0	19.8

^a *Ibid.*, p. 84.

ing day" also is an occasion for more or less of it. Work exchange is thus reduced to a minor scale.

In the South the tenants on the large plantations are accustomed to work together at tasks where groups can operate to advantage.⁵

A study of farmers in three geographic sections of the State of North Carolina disclosed a small amount of exchange of work among all classes. The above table shows how extensive it was.

⁵ C. C. Taylor and C. C. Zimmerman, *Economic and Social Conditions of North Carolina Farmers*, p. 84.

The amount of work exchanged is one index of the community spirit and solidarity of the farming class.

Woman's Work on the Farm

The average American farmstead is at once a home and a business establishment. This makes agriculture highly domestic. There are, however, pretty well defined and fairly distinct spheres of labor for men and women. Woman's work, according to the best traditions of the farm, lies indoors. What is proper for each, custom dictates. This is worthy of mention merely because it is not thus in the Old World. No such careful division of labor obtains between men and women on the farms of Europe as in America. To some extent the Old World's peasant ways have come to America and may be found in vogue in certain sections.

Woman's work, it should be said, even according to the most common tradition, is not altogether restricted to the home. Certain outdoor duties very commonly fall to her lot. It is the rare farm where she does not care very largely for the poultry. In some general farming regions as a rule, and in individual cases in sections where it is not the rule, women do the milking and make the garden. In most parts of the country they may help with the field work, especially in times of great urgency.

A survey of some 10,000 farm homes in 33 states of the North and West made by the Federal Department of Agriculture throws some light on the extent of outdoor work done by women. It was found that 25 per cent help with livestock, 24 per cent do field work on an average of 6.7 weeks per year, 56 per cent care for gardens, 36 per cent milk, 81 per cent keep poultry, 88 per cent wash milk pails, 65 per cent wash separators, and 60 per cent make butter.⁶

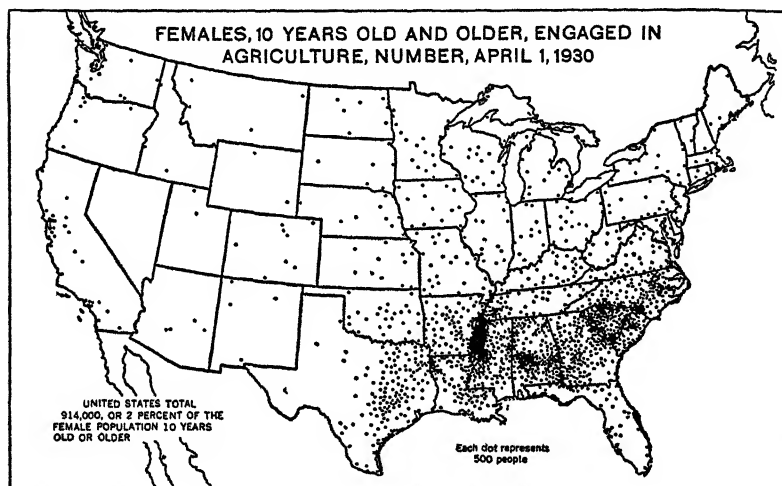
In the more prosperous agricultural sections there is undoubtedly a tendency for women to refrain from much field work. A

⁶ Ward, Florence E., "The Farm Woman's Problems," U.S.D.A. *Circular* 148, Nov., 1920, p. 10.

growing sense of disapproval, with a rising economic status, is at the bottom of the change.

In the South among renters and croppers both white and colored wives are commonly hoe-hands in the field from 8 to 10 hours per day during six months of the year.

According to the 1930 census, women constituted 8.7 per cent of all persons gainfully employed in agriculture, and 14.7 per cent



65. Showing Distribution of Women Engaged in Agriculture, April 1, 1930

Source: Folsom and Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

of all farm laborers. Five-sixths of women farm laborers were reported from the Southern States. In the Rocky Mountain and North Central States where sugar beets are produced ⁷ women are regular field hands.

The hours of woman's work, whether it is confined to the house or divided with outdoor tasks, are generally long. Her day's work is proverbially never done.

Table 54, based on reports from 10,000 Northern and Western

⁷ J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," United States Department of Agriculture, *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, p. 2.

Table 54

LENGTH OF WORKING DAY AND VACATION OF FARM WOMEN ^a

Section of Country	Summer		Winter		Proportion of Women Having Regular Vacation	Length of Vacation
	Work Hrs.	Rest Hrs.	Work Hrs.	Rest Hrs.	Per Cent	Days
Eastern	13.0	1.6	10.7	2.3	13.0	12.4
Central	13.2	1.5	10.5	2.3	12.0	10.8
Western ..	13.0	1.8	10.2	2.4	13.0	16.4
Countrywide	13.1	1.6	10.5	2.4	13.0	11.5
Number of records	9,530	8,360	9,164	8,164	8,773	1,241

^a Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

farm women, probably gives a true representation of conditions.

The "hired girl," once a factor on the farm, seems to be passing. The survey just cited indicates this. The number of homes employing one regularly is negligible, and but 14 per cent reported such help for short periods. The average period during which help worked was 3.6 months. The Eastern States showed the highest per cent of hired women but the shortest term of employment. In the Western States it was just the reverse. Only 8 to 10 per cent of the homes reported help by the day. The average was about 1¼ days per week. Here again the East leads.⁸

The passing of the "hired girl" is due to the urbanward migration of country girls who must work; to smaller rural families; and to the use of machinery which lessens household burdens. This does not mean that the farm woman's work is being greatly eased up; it only means that she must carry such burdens as there are alone.

Children's Work and Child Labor

It is customary for children to work on American farms. The Fifth Census reported 469,497 children between 10 and 15 years

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

of age gainfully employed in agriculture. This number constituted 73.7 per cent of all the children between these ages gainfully employed in the various occupations of the United States. In the age group 10-13, agriculture had 87.3 per cent of all.

It is significant that the proportion of children gainfully employed in agriculture was more in 1930 than in 1920, the increase being from 61 per cent of the whole to 73.7 per cent in the 10-15 age group. This, despite a decline of 174,677 in absolute numbers, indicated a relatively greater decrease in occupations other than agriculture.

Table 55

NUMBER OF CHILDREN 10-15 YEARS OF AGE IN
EACH PRINCIPAL DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONS, 1930

Occupation	Number of Children 10-15 Years of Age
Agriculture	469,497
Manufacturing and Mechanical Industries	68,266
Trade	49,615
Domestic and Personal Service	46,145
Clerical Occupations	16,803
Transportation and Communication	8,717
Forestry and Fishing	1,562
Extraction of Minerals	1,184
Others	5,331
Total	667,118

However, the census did not give a true picture of rural child labor, for children under ten were not counted, altho a great many very young children are employed on farms. The National Child Labor Committee declares that the census taken on April 1, as was that of 1930, did not catch thousands of children who work in the summer. Proof of this is clear. For instance, the census reported only 2,051 children under 16 years engaged in agriculture in Colorado, altho one large beet sugar company reported that in

1930, 6,000 children 6-16 were employed in its beet fields. Similarly, in New Jersey the census reported only 706 children 10-16 gainfully employed in agriculture, whereas the Migratory Child Survey Commission personally interviewed 1,342 children working in the fields of that state during the summer of 1930.⁹

Migratory child labor is common in certain crop areas. In California alone in 1927 some 37,000 migratory children were engaged in agriculture. During the same year some 85,000 Mexican children were following the crop from place to place thruout the country.¹⁰ A study made of migratory cotton pickers in Arizona in 1937 calls attention to many children working along with their parents. The school-attendance law preventing those of school age from working during school time was not enforced, hence child labor existed in all districts and was widespread in areas which ignored the law.¹¹

A distinction has been made between child labor and children's work. By the former is meant work that interferes with health, education, and recreation, while children's work may be described as work that does not interfere with the child's welfare.

"Child labor," says Raymond G. Fuller, "is the work that interferes with a full living of the life of childhood and with the best possible preparation for adulthood. It is a matter not only of effects and hazards, but of deprivations among which are the lack of suitable and sufficient schooling, the lack of suitable and sufficient play, and the lack of that kind and amount of work which is *children's work* as distinguished from *child labor*. Obviously, the condition of child labor depends to a large extent on the individual case—the particular boy or girl on the one hand, the particular work on the other. . . . There may be child labor without any wages at all, and wages without child labor."¹²

⁹ *Child Labor Facts*, National Child Labor Committee, New York, 1933.

¹⁰ C. C. Taylor, H. W. Wheeler, and E. L. Kirkpatrick, "Disadvantaged Classes in American Agriculture," United States Department of Agriculture, *Social Research Report No. VIII*, April, 1938, p. 27.

¹¹ Malcolm Brown and Orin Cassmare, *Migratory Cotton Pickers in Arizona*, W. P. A. Division of Research, 1939, pp. 25, 26.

¹² Raymond G. Fuller, *Child Labor and the Constitution*, p. 3.

Not all gainfully employed children in agriculture are child laborers in a derogatory sense. Either working at home or "working out" may or may not be harmful. Unquestionably much gainful employment for children is harmful.

The National Child Labor Committee found in West Virginia that children were kept out of school for such work as harvesting, husking corn, sowing wheat, cutting and hauling wood, going to mill, caring for the sick, washing, gathering and hauling apples, cutting and stripping tobacco, etc. During the summer season both boys and girls were found more fully employed at chores, hoeing corn, worming and suckering tobacco, raking and pitching hay, and every other kind of work possible for them to do. Girls were working in the fields with the boys at like tasks. Not uncommonly parents reported their 12-year-old boy or girl as hoeing corn for 12 hours a day. Some 14- to 16-year-old girls "made a hand with the plow." Nearly all boys of 14 or over were reported as "regular farm hands," i. e., doing a man's work. "One man and his 15-year-old daughter plowed 40 acres of corn." In many instances children under 12 were spending 10 and 11 hours daily for weeks at work in the fields.¹³

The Federal Children's Bureau found conditions to be much the same in a mountain county of North Carolina as in West Virginia. Over nine-tenths of the children visited, 8 to 15 years old, worked with their parents in the fields and woods. In another county of the lowlands, it found that two-thirds of the white children and three-fourths of the Negro were helping in the fields as well as doing chores. The renters and croppers were regularly sending their children at 7 and 8 years into the field to toil. At every step in the process of growing cotton, from plowing the ground to planting, "chopping," hoeing, and picking, boys and girls from 5 to 15 were at work. In tobacco growing similar conditions obtained. In corn raising children were engaged in planting, plowing, hoeing, and in the autumn in "stripping" fodder. In cotton picking they usually spend long hours and are often subject to great fatigue and muscular strain. Other work, such as "chopping" cotton, or "stripping"

¹³ W. W. Armentrout, *Rural Child Welfare*, The Macmillan Co., 1922, p. 71.

fodder, is hard, monotonous, and taxing for boys and girls of tender years. Hours of labor vary with the season and family customs, but in summer they are often from "sun to sun."¹⁴

A similar situation was found in the cotton belt of Texas, where children were spending an average of ten and one-half hours per day in field work for three to six months. Many were doing heavy work, such as plowing, harrowing, planting, and cultivating. However, the bulk of the work was chopping and picking cotton. In this many children under six were employed.¹⁵

A survey of child labor in North Dakota thru 162 one-room and 18 graded schools of the farming districts found that 35 per cent of the children had worked under one month and 22 per cent had worked four months or longer in a single period of the summer months or at intervals of a few weeks now and then thruout the year. About half of the 845 children under seventeen years of age, including 54 girls, had plowed. One-fourth of those under twelve and some only seven or eight years old had plowed. One-fourth of the children had operated a disk and two-fifths had harrowed. More than half of those doing these tasks were under fourteen and not a few were girls.¹⁶

Farming is ranked by the insurance companies as an extra hazardous occupation. That this fact ought to be frankly recognized in relation to the labor of children, the number of serious injuries reported by the North Dakota Survey gives abundant proof.¹⁷

The studies here summarized probably reflect typical conditions over wide rural areas. Certain special crop areas are worse than the average. This seems to be true of the cotton and tobacco sections of the South, of the sugar beet counties of Colorado, and of the small fruit and trucking areas of Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey. Other regions may be generally freer from child labor in its extreme forms.

¹⁴ F. S. Bradley and Margaretta Williamson, "Rural Children in Selected Counties of North Carolina," U. S. Dept. of Labor, *Children's Bureau. Publication No. 331*, pp. 49-52.

¹⁵ *Children's Bureau Publication No. 134*, pp. 8, 13.

¹⁶ *Children's Bureau Publication No. 129*, pp. 8-20.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

That children on the farm should work, is an accepted rule the country over. It is a hold-over tradition from the days of the self-sufficient farm era, in which making a living was a task at which all had to work. Moreover, it is considered good for children to work, for it keeps them out of mischief. Such is the attitude of both well-to-do farmers and poor tenants.

The press of work is so great, the supply of labor so meager, and the resources with which to hire so limited on the average farm that there is every inducement to set all hands to the tasks. Often, too, the country boy is eager enough to undertake anything and will clamor for a chance to show what he can do. It having once been demonstrated that he can do a man's stint, parental pressure may be applied and exacting demands made until the child is turned into a full-fledged worker.

There is an idea abroad in the country of profiting from children's labor. Parents exploit their boys and girls in numerous cases. Such treatment often creates a rebellious spirit in the child. The reaction of a 14-year-old boy in West Virginia toward his work is not unusual. He said, "I ain't goin' to stay here much longer; I have to work myself to death and don't get nothin' out of it; never get to go nowhurs. I don't like it and I ain't goin' to stay."¹⁸

Unfortunately, few farmers see anything wrong with child labor. The attitude of a prominent farmer and leader in a prosperous West Virginia community reflects a common indifference. Asked if he thought the children in the community were in any way injured by the work they did on the farms, he answered, "No, indeed! More work would be better for them and the community would be more prosperous."¹⁹

This attitude has made it possible for vicious industrial interests to carry on a successful propaganda against the regulation of child labor by constitutional amendment. The situation is well characterized by a country pastor in the following:

"In the history of agriculture there has been no more pitiful case of confusion of thought and blind leading of the blind than the opposition of the farmers to the child labor amendment. Paid rep-

¹⁸ W. W. Armentrout, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

representatives of industries that profit by child labor have gone to the farmers with stories that qualify as pure fiction and myth. 'If this amendment is passed, the children on the farm will not be permitted to do the chores—run errands, split kindling, or wash dishes.' 'The Government will run your home and invade your most sacred rights as parents.' In the meantime the officials of farm organizations have been influenced by industries interested in child labor to oppose the amendment.

"Most of my life I have lived among farmers and have tried to promote their best interests. I confess this child labor opposition is the most distressing situation I have ever known among farmers. Aside from its inherent injustice to children it seems to give at least a semblance of truth to a contention which the enemies of farmers have long maintained—that they are gullible, selfish, and ignorant. Why gullible? Because they listen to the stories about chores and dish-washing. Selfish? Because they want to profit by child labor. Ignorant? Because they have not got at the facts about the child amendment. No wonder progressive farmers are asking, 'Are farmers peasants?' This child labor proposition causes every friend of the race to shudder. Can a great section of America be swung into line against child rights by myths, fairy tales, selfishness, and the boggy of Government control?"²⁰

Altho it is true that a reasonable amount of work under favorable conditions will not injure the health of a normal child and the training that it gives will not come amiss when he grows up, there is obviously another side to the question. Much farm work where it is a regular daily grind, monotonous, fatiguing, and too heavy for their strength, is injurious to the health of growing boys and girls. Where it does not injure health, it stunts mental and moral development by ruling out play. The notion that children must be kept out of idleness is responsible for a rural prejudice against recreation and play and the undue insistence upon keeping busy. This results in cramping the souls of country boys and girls. The evils of child labor, however, are most patent in relation to school-

²⁰ C. M. McConnell, Board of Sunday Schools, M. E. Church, "Zion's Herald," quoted in *Rural America*, June, 1925, p. 10.

ing. Education is sacrificed to work. The school term is cut short and there is continual interruption of school attendance in many sections of the country from this cause. Forty-two per cent of the farm owners, 72 per cent of the tenants and 53 per cent of the farm laborers covered by the West Virginia study stated that they kept their children home from school to work.²¹

Similar practices prevailed in Kentucky,²² Texas,²³ North Carolina,²⁴ and North Dakota. In the last state 48 per cent of the children questioned were kept from school to work. It meant retardation of a year or more.²⁵ This means everywhere retardation, discouragement, indifference, and, in the long run, ignorance and virtual illiteracy for many. The study in the lowland district of North Carolina revealed the fact that 1 white child out of 10 and 1 Negro out of 3 between the ages of 10 and 20 years, had not learned even to read and write. In the mountains the rate was approximately 1 out of 3.

Doubtless, the worst conditions to be found anywhere are those associated with migratory child workers in agriculture. Such children are nomads, the victims of low income, hard working conditions, vicious moral situations, insanitary and temporary living quarters, family and home instability, neglected and irregular schooling, insufficient carefree association and play, and a hopeless outlook on life. Such circumstances can scarcely condition good future citizens.

Work of children on the farms is at best difficult to regulate, and laws generally exempt farms from such limitations as are placed on child labor. The best curbs are compulsory school attendance laws that will actually compel and a school term of at least nine months' duration. All states now have compulsory educational laws, but they are far from satisfactory in actual operation. The farmer himself needs to be educated to a wiser attitude toward childhood before much headway can be made in bettering conditions.

²¹ Armentrout, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

²² Ridgeway, *Journal of Social Forces*, March, 1923, p. 293.

²³ *Children's Bureau Publication* No. 134.

²⁴ Bradley and Williamson, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

²⁵ *Children's Bureau Publication* No. 129, p. 30.

The Hired Man on the Farm

When the farm family and working force are one and the same, whatever outside help is added has naturally become a part of the family group. Such has been the custom generally thruout the Northern States, where those hired have been neighbors' sons. In the South, where the color line is drawn, and elsewhere if large numbers are employed, hired help is not taken into the family circle.

However, customs are changing. The traditional hired man is rapidly disappearing. Machinery and other factors have caused transient labor to displace him and to render his position generally insecure. The new type of worker is not received into the family circle. The following statement of a Minnesota farm woman gives the reason:

"When the boys of some neighboring farmer can be hired, I have no objection, but when a stranger comes into the house of whom we know nothing, I never feel at ease, and often he is not a desirable companion for my boys."²⁶

When the hired man was on the way to proprietorship, his social status was not inferior to that of the farm owner's family. Few are headed that way any more; hence they have lost caste, become isolated, and are no longer treated as part of the domestic circle or of the community. Thus the hired man is tending, along with the seasonal worker and the gang laborer, to become a class-conscious proletarian like the English agricultural laborer.

The census of 1930 reported 4,372,258 agricultural laborers. This represented 26.6 per cent decrease over 1910 and 2 per cent over 1920. Insofar as the decrease is real and not due to a different time of taking the enumeration, the decline traces to the increased use of machinery and the drift to cities.

Not all the farm labor is hired. Some is unpaid home labor. This amounted to 37.8 per cent of the total in 1930, whereas it was 43.7 per cent in 1920. Of the total number of hired farm workers in

²⁶ G. A. Lundquist, "What Farm Women Are Thinking," Univ. of Minnesota Agr. Ext. Div. *Bulletin No. 71*, May, 1923, p. 4.

1930, women constituted some 6.3 per cent, or 171,000 persons. In 1920 they equalled 237,000, or 9.7 per cent. Since 1930, home farm laborers have increased rapidly on account of the backing up of youth in the country.

The proportion of laborers to farm operators was unusually high in 1910. Barring 1910 the ratio between the two classes has remained fairly constant since 1880. The following table makes this clear:

Table 56

NUMBER OF FARM OPERATORS AND LABORERS AND THE RATIO
BETWEEN THEM AT VARIOUS CENSUS PERIODS

Year	No. of Operators	Per Cent of Increase or Decrease	No. of Laborers	Per Cent of Increase or Decrease	Ratio of 100 Laborers to Operators
1880	4,389,999	...	3,323,876	...	132
1890	5,561,865	26.7	3,586,583	7.1	154
1900	5,970,889	7.3	4,410,877	22.9	135
1910	6,479,511	8.5	6,088,414	38.3	106
1920	6,448,343	-0.5	4,462,628	-26.6	144
1930	6,288,648	-2.4	4,372,258	-02.0	143

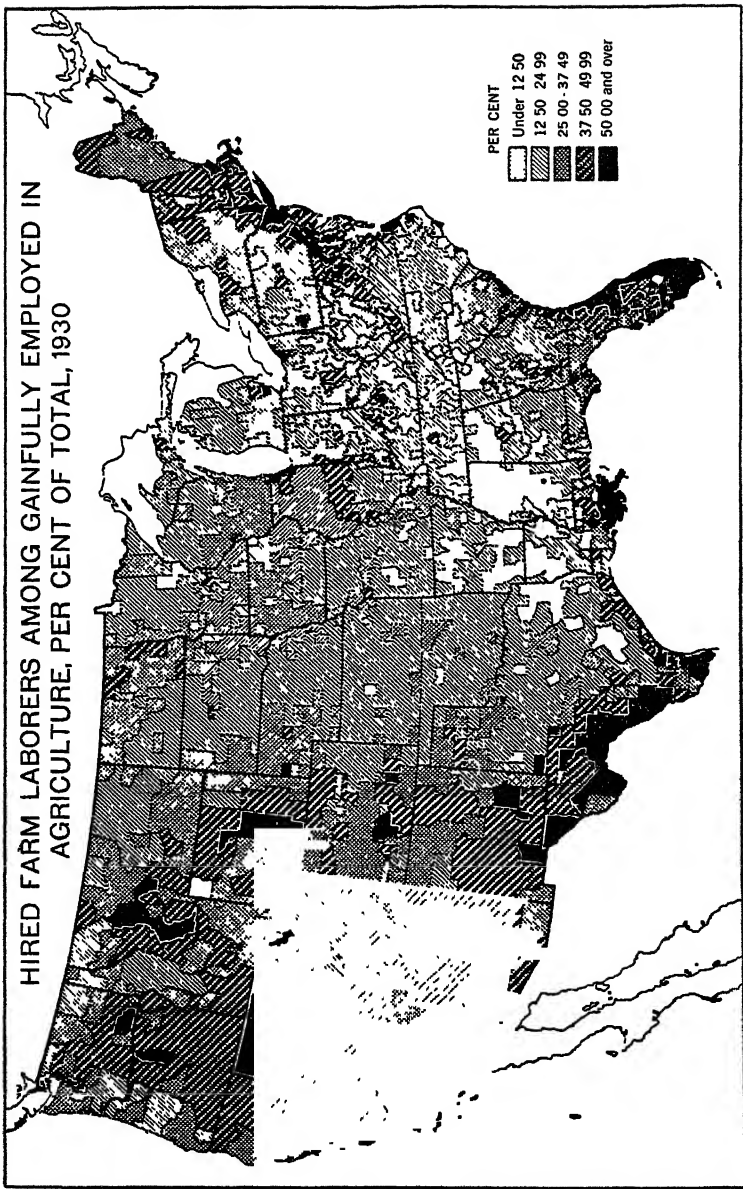
The explanation of the ratio has generally been found in the influence of agricultural machinery. Altho normally machinery reduces the labor needed to produce a given amount of any crop, there has been expanding production with the increased use of machinery, the two forces resulting in a stable ratio. In the light of a study of employment in agriculture during 1909-36 it appears doubtful if the ratio now holds.²⁷

It has been a very general custom where month hands are hired, for the farmers to employ them for only 6 or 7 months of the year. This leaves the laborer unemployed usually thru the winter months and necessitates his finding some other job. The custom has had a tendency to turn men cityward in quest of more permanent employment.

Increased mechanization is rapidly displacing labor. Most of the 200,000 hands of the Wheat Belt have vanished before the com-

²⁷ E. E. Shaw and J. A. Hopkins, *Trends in Employment in Agriculture, 1909-36*, National Research Project, Washington, 1938.

HIRED FARM LABORERS AMONG GAINFULLY EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE, PER CENT OF TOTAL, 1930



66. Showing Distribution of Hired Farm Labor in 1930

Source: C. C. Taylor, Helen W. Wheeler, and E. L. Kirkpatrick, "Disadvantaged Classes in American Agriculture," U.S.D.A. *Social Research Report No. VIII*, April, 1938, p. 33.

bine. In the Corn and Cotton Belts laborers along with tenants and sharecroppers are being "tractored off" the land. At the same time the depression has caused farm operators to dispense with much hired labor.

Migratory Labor

Much migratory agricultural labor is found in various areas. Its routes of travel spread over three-fourths of the states. There is a heavy concentration in the Southwest, the Pacific Northwest, some of the Rocky Mountain States, in Arkansas, California, Florida, and elsewhere. It has sprung up in response to a demand for hands to cultivate certain crops, as sugar beets, and to harvest fruit, vegetables, hops, cotton, small grain, and other products. There seem to be two classes of such laborers, those who go out from farms, towns and cities for the season, and those who are permanently on the move from one crop to another over the country.

The number of migratory laborers is estimated to be anywhere from 200,000 to 350,000.²⁸ Before 1925 the wheat harvest of the Great Plains called an army of 250,000 workers into the fields. Some came from farms in the Mississippi Valley, but probably two-thirds were homeless migrants from city lodging houses who were "shipped" by labor agencies into the region.²⁹

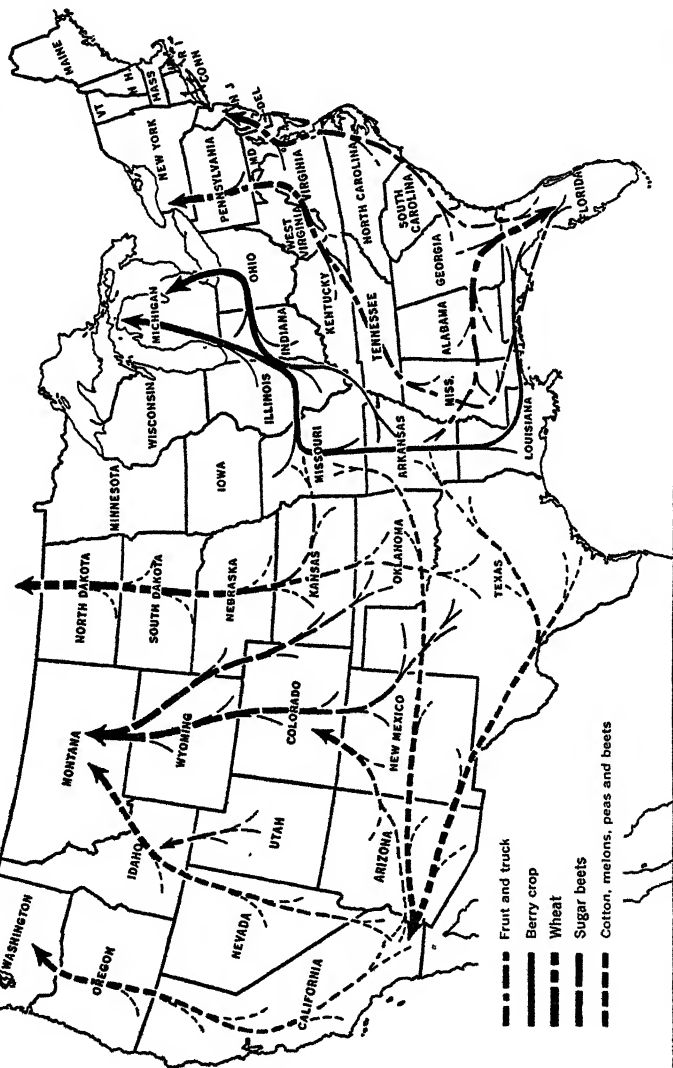
There is among the migrants a considerable element of drifters who follow various occupational cycles. Lescoghier says:³⁰ "There are Oklahoman seasonal laborers who follow the cycle of oil wells, cotton fields, wheat harvest, sawmills, railroads and cattle ranches. There are those in the Dakotas and the North who follow lumbering in the winter, spring farm work, construction work, then harvesting and threshing. There is likewise a building and harvest cycle followed by an urban group. There is also a purely agricultural cycle group of men who work in hay, wheat, potato digging, corn harvesting, etc. Other migratory laborers do not follow any definite cycle but 'circulate thru from five to a dozen occupations.'

²⁸ C. C. Taylor, H. W. Wheeler, and E. L. Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

³⁰ Lescoghier, "Harvesters and Hoboes in the Wheat Fields," *The Survey*, Aug. 1, 1923, p. 482-487.

STREAMS OF INTERSTATE FARM LABOR MIGRATION

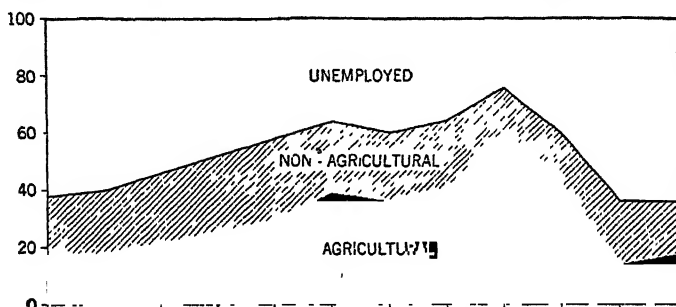


67. Showing Streams of Interstate Farm Labor Migration

Source: *Ibid.*, p. 23.

In the winter, such a man's options may be the woods, ice harvest and dish-washing in a restaurant; in the spring, building, railroad work and farming; in the summer, railroad work, harvesting and highway construction; in the fall the potato and corn harvests, road work, building or railroad work and tile ditching."³¹

The migratory laborer cannot get work for more than 40 to 60 per cent of the year. As a result, he is likely to be homeless, often jobless, on relief at intervals, and not accepted by the communities where he chances to work for only a brief period. In many



68. Percentage of Their Time Transient Men in Yakima Valley, Washington, Are Employed and Unemployed

Source: P. H. Landis and Richard Wakefield, "The Annual Employment Cycle of Farm Labor Household," State College of Washington Agr. Exp. Station *Rural Sociology Series in Farm Labor*, No. 2, July, 1938, p. 5.

areas he and his family, if he has one, belong to a class that rightly or wrongly has fallen into disrepute. On the Pacific coast, for instance, according to a recent report, "Fruit tramps," 'pea pickers,' 'hop pickers,' are terms which in various communities imply inferior caste. They are unable to associate on equal terms with the 'better' people of the area. Their children are stigmatized in schools, and they are not welcomed in churches, lodges or other organizations. Their poverty forces them to dwell in separate areas—further emphasizing the feeling that they were 'set apart.'"³²

³¹ Lescohier, *Ibid.*, p. 487.

³² C. F. Reuss, P. H. Landis, and R. Wakefield, "Migratory Farm Labor and the Hop Industry on the Pacific Coast," State College of Washington Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 363*, August, 1938, p. 63.

This class is becoming a permanent one, denied security, and most of the rights, decencies, and privileges of ordinary residents. There have been attempts to hamper their moving across state lines by officials bent on keeping out vagrants. California tried to establish the "Bum Blockade" against the "Okies," "Arkies," and "Texies." In the states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington, efforts of migratory workers to organize for self protection have been bitterly opposed and often ruthlessly suppressed by farm owners or by gunmen acting as the agents of land-owners. In California the Associated Farmers, representing big agricultural corporations, have been especially active against the migrants. The latter have responded by organizing unions of agricultural workers affiliated with the C.I.O.

The state of permanent migratory workers is a deplorable one. Their median net earnings for the season was only \$110 in 1933 and \$124 in 1934.³³ Their numbers are growing, due in part to the increasing use of agricultural machinery on large farms.³⁴ They appear to be doomed to form a fixed nomadic proletarian class in rural society.

The prospects of agricultural laborers of all types are discouraging. Everywhere it is becoming extremely hard to accumulate enough as a laborer to become a renter or landowner. Moreover, farm owners by the use of machinery and their own families are curtailing the demand for hired help. Thus the outlook for this class in agriculture grows darker.

The Farmer's Marketing

In his struggle for a living, the farmer is concerned not alone with land, labor, and production, but with the marketing of his produce also. Once the American farmer had little to do with marketing. That was in the early days before a world economy had developed, when a strictly local economy prevailed. A century ago

³³ J. N. Webb, "The Migratory-Casual Workers," *WPA Research Monograph VII*, 1937, p. 63.

³⁴ C. H. Hamilton, "Social Effects of Mechanization of Agriculture," *Rural Sociology*, March, 1939, p. 14.

the farmer consumed about all he produced and produced about all he consumed. He was "self-sufficient" and independent.

Today all this is changed. The typical farmer now produces to sell. His business has become a commercial pursuit concerned with markets, with selling and buying, and making money. His plans do not involve raising things for his own consumption so much as producing a money crop with which to buy manufactured goods. So he has become a commercial man as well as a soil tiller. This alteration in the economic process has given rise to new ways of business. The old competitive marketing system after prolonged trial has proved a failure. Coöperation has arisen instead. This method of selling has become widespread and already involves most staple products. The coöperative method is being extended also to purchasing farm supplies. In time conditions may force its application to agricultural production as well as buying and selling. If that should come to pass, it would signify a rural cultural revolution.

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Topics for Discussion

1. So long as the farm family remains a work unit, as it does even among migratory farm laborers, how can rural child labor be abolished?
2. Since so much farm work is seasonal, requiring a large labor supply for only brief periods, how provide means of self-support for the labor force between seasons?
3. Make a list of pathological social conditions prevalent among migratory agricultural laborers.

4. How far has the modern farm woman been relieved of drudgery since 1900 and what agencies would be most beneficial to her?
5. What factors have brought about a change in the status of hired labor on the farms in the last half century?
6. If the mechanization of agriculture should lead to extensive large-scale farming, how would it affect the farm-family unit?
7. In case of extensive mechanization and large-scale farming, what would be the effect on population mobility?
8. How far has the labor situation on the farms of your community changed since 1930? How do you account for it?

TYPES OF FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

Secondary Grouping

WHILE treating of community structure in Part II, we dealt chiefly with primary grouping, in which association is normally of persons as wholes and where collective activities tend to embrace all members of the group. Ideally at least, and at times practically, all individuals in their total social relations are involved. This is why such groupings are called primary.

In another sense, we were considering organization by position, for the village and neighborhood are basically territorial areas embracing in the existing organization all persons dwelling in them by virtue of their location or position. Thus areas, people, and interests tend to coincide and permit organization to be at once all-inclusive by position and by interest or function.

In this chapter, however, functional or special interest organization is to be considered. This type tends to supersede mere locality or position organization. Altho it has never been wholly absent from rural society, in the old neighborhood, where common interests were all-embracing, it was scarcely distinguishable from locality association. Today, when the people of the country are breaking away from the old unities, sorting themselves out according to their various interests, and joining together on that basis, functional association begins to stand out in a conspicuous manner.

Making the Most of the Old Map

In many ways the most significant phase of rural regrouping is the development of coöperative associations. We shall give them first consideration.

On the basis of the existing order, the coöperative movement is seeking to project a new map. Altho in a few cases it has effected regrouping by location thru the establishment of coöperative farms, in general it seeks regrouping thru interests. Out of isolation, individualism, independence, and self-seeking it endeavors to build correlated activities first in things economic and then for other ends. The movement is logical enough and sound in that it grapples first with the fundamental problem of making a living. It is quite natural too, in that it is one phase of an inevitable reaction to the forces of present-day civilization. It was not until modern means of communication appeared that the coöperative movement met with much success in America. Rural geography was against it; as Miss Irvine has said, "In the country, geography is an obstacle to the organization of society on the basis of function."¹ Altho this obstacle has not been wholly removed, the revolution in communication and transportation has so far changed the outlook that a widely scattered farm population now has little difficulty on account of geographical conditions in effecting organization. The rapid expansion of interest organization during recent years gives proof of this and at the same time promise of a more satisfactory rural order.

The Rise of Coöperative Organization

As organization for marketing, buying, credit and other purely economic interests, coöperation represents the response of agriculture to commercial conditions. It represents the venture of farmers into commerce. In America and Europe alike it has this significance. Before the era of world markets, buying and selling were not problems of the farmer. But with the industrialization and urbanization of a large part of the nation, everything changed to a commercial basis, including farming. Therefore commercialization of agriculture is the *first* factor in the rise of coöperation. A *second* one, reflecting another phase of the change, is specialization in production. Until the producer could profitably raise a single product

¹ *The Making of Rural Europe*, p. 170.

and find a market for it, specialization did not exist in farming. A commercial order gave the needed markets and hence fostered specialization. Specialization in turn presently found itself in difficulty and sought relief thru coöperation. A *third* factor is the profit motive. It has led to the exploitation of farm products by numerous middlemen. This has worked to the disadvantage of the farmer and inspired him to seek control of the middleman function thru his own agencies and for his own gain. A *fourth* factor is the increasing cost of marketing, due to the growing complexity of society. This has caused a tremendous spread between the prices at the farm and those in the marts of the city. The farmer has seen the consumer's dollar shrink to only thirty or forty cents in his own pocket. So he seeks to recover a larger part of the dollar thru organizations of his own. In the *fifth* place, his growing familiarity with monopolies that prevail in urban life has suggested the possibilities of agricultural monopolies to fix the price of farm products. A *sixth* factor has been the revolution in communication and transportation that was ushered in by the twentieth century. A *final* factor is the coming into vogue of specialization in social organization, which urban and industrial life has fostered. Special organization for advancing special needs is a practice carried over from the city to the country. The coöperative association is but one illustration of it.

The rise of this movement was a gradual development of nearly fifty years. Its present phase, as O. M. Kile has said, "is but the culmination and latest expression of a crusade which had its inception back in the dark days following the Civil War, and which with varying degrees of vigor and success has pushed forward the farmer's fight for free and equal privilege and opportunity."² The movement was closely associated with the rise and decline of the Grange, the Farmers' Alliance, the Agricultural Wheel, the Farmers' Union, the Equity Society, the Gleaners, and various independent political parties that have had agrarian origin. All of these efforts gave more or less impetus to the development of coöperative organization.

² O. M. Kile, *The Farm Bureau Movement*, p. 3.

Four stages of growth have been described by Professor Hibbard.³

The *first stage* he calls the *experimental period*. It covered the thirty years ending in 1901, and was characterized by strictly local organizations. These were largely dairy concerns,⁴ in which only a minimum of coöperation was present. Probably less than five hundred locals of all sorts came into existence in, and survived, that period.

The *second stage*, 1902 to 1911, is described as the beginning of *coherence* among local associations. Loose state federations were formed. The first centralized agencies also appeared. There was considerable growth, for between 1,100 and 1,200 locals began operation in that decade.

The *third period*, 1912 to 1921, was the *boom* era of organization. About 3,200 new associations originated during this time. There was a rapid expansion of local coöperatives, an extensive multiplication of federations, and a marked growth of great centralized agencies. Grain, fruit, vegetables, cotton, tobacco and live stock marketing companies were the outstanding lines of development.

The *fourth period*, from 1921 to 1929, was one of *reorganization* or readjustment. There was continued growth, but on the whole at a slower rate than in the preceding period. The large regional associations encountered many difficulties. A number failed. All faced the problem of adopting new methods.

A *fifth period* needs to be added to Hibbard's four, since coöperation has experienced a new development beginning with 1929 when the Agricultural Marketing Act established the Federal Farm Board. The Farm Board directed its efforts mainly to the promotion of the coöperative movement especially in the field of the large-scale sales agencies.

Since 1931, *consolidation* and decline have been marked. The number of associations shrank from 12,000 to 10,900 in 1938, chiefly on account of consolidations of sales agencies. This, however, has not meant a decrease in the number of farmers engaged

³ See B. J. Hibbard, *The Annals*, Vol. 117, No. 206, pp. 201-207.

in coöperative activity, but only an increase in the average number per association.⁴

Coöperative organization has finally become the most significant aspect of rural interest association. The number of societies as well as their membership is constantly fluctuating. Many thousands have been organized and gone out of existence, but, with only a

Table 57

FARMERS' MARKETING AND PURCHASING ASSOCIATIONS, ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP AND ESTIMATED BUSINESS,^a WITH PERCENTAGES, BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS, LEADING STATES, AND SPECIFIED GROUPS, 1937-38 MARKETING SEASON. REVISED NOV. 1, 1938

Geographic Division, State, Group	Associations Listed ^b		Estimated Members ^c		Estimated Business ^{d e}	
Geographic Division:	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	1,000 dollars	Per Cent
East North Central	2,666	24.5	924,530	27.2	676,230	28.2
West North Central	4,549	41.7	1,017,410	29.9	613,060	25.5
Pacific	949	8.7	199,960	5.9	383,430	16.0
Middle Atlantic ..	506	4.6	275,190	8.1	212,890	8.9
West South Central	730	6.7	256,740	7.6	144,080	6.0
South Atlantic .	466	4.3	160,240	4.7	103,470	4.3
Mountain	580	5.3	164,800	4.8	102,760	4.3
New England	172	1.6	133,870	3.9	93,290	3.9
East South Central	282	2.6	267,260	7.9	70,790	2.9
Total	10,900	100.0	3,400,000	100.0	2,400,000	100.0

Source, *Circular Farm Credit Administration*, Nov. 1, 1938.

^a Estimated membership and estimated business for each association is credited to the state in which the association has its headquarters.

^b Includes independent local associations, federations, large-scale centralized associations, sales agencies, and independent service-rendering associations, and subsidiaries whose business is distinct from that of the parent organizations.

^c Includes members, contract members and shareholders, but does not include patrons not in these categories.

^d Includes some intraassociation transactions.

^e The purchasing business of the marketing associations is estimated at \$117,000,000, and the marketing business of the purchasing associations is estimated at \$27,000,000. After adjustments the totals are: marketing \$1,960,000,000, purchasing \$440,000,000, total \$2,400,000,000.

⁴ R. H. Elsworth, "Statistics of Farmers' Coöperative Business Organizations," *Farm Credit Administration, Bulletin No. 6*, May, 1936, p. 12.

few lapses, both the number of associations and the total membership have mounted steadily for twenty-five years.

In 1938 the Farm Credit Administration reported 10,900. Table 57 indicates their distribution, membership, and volume of business.

The 3,400,000 estimated members were distributed among ten different commodity marketing groups as follows: Dairy products, 700,000; livestock, 600,000; grain, 360,000; cotton, 350,000; fruit and vegetables, 164,000; poultry and products, 106,000; tobacco, 70,000; wool, 50,000; nuts, 15,800; and miscellaneous, 84,200; purchasing, 900,000. This membership represents about 2,000,000 different persons, for many belong to more than one marketing and purchasing association. In the Northern and Western States 46 per cent belong to two or more. This number is equivalent to nearly one-third of the farm operators.⁵

Coöperative intensity varies by geographic sections and by states, its center being in the 12 North Central States with two-thirds of the associations and over 57 per cent of the membership. The four states having the largest number of associations in order of rank are Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois; and those with the largest membership are Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin in the order named. Other important states outside this group are California and Missouri. New England and the Southern States are generally weak in coöperative organizations.

Types and Method of Coöperative Organization

What constitutes a coöperative organization? Altho there is much variety of type, when boiled down to essentials, coöperation usually means: (1) each member has only one vote; (2) division of dividends is on the basis of the amount of patronage rather than of the amount of stock held; (3) membership is confined, in the case of marketing associations, to producers only.

It is important to note that a coöperative organization is not a joint stock corporation. Democratic control and mutual benefit are the underlying ideas upon which it must rest.

There are six types engaged in the business end of agriculture.

⁵ *Circular Farm Credit Administration*, Nov. 1, 1938.

The first is the *local associations*. These are, on the average, groups of forty to fifty members. As a rule they limit their activities to one commodity. In exceptional cases several commodities are handled.

A variety of commodities, including practically every important farm product, has been the basis of these locals. The chief commodities, however, are dairy products, grain, fruit, vegetables, live-stock, cotton, wool, and tobacco. Coöperative purchasing covers an increasing number of farm supplies.

Local associations are generally concerned primarily with the local problems of the farmer's business. Where they work alone, they come into competition with one another in the general market. In consequence they have not greatly benefited their members, for, as locals, they scarcely make any impression on the general economic situation.

Manifestly, the local coöperative is concerned with economic affairs. It is usually organized on a "business only" basis. If any attention is directed to other interests, they must be more or less incidental. A little farther on we shall come back to this question for fuller consideration, for its implications are highly important.

A second type of coöperative organization is the *federation*. This represents a union of locals for greater efficiency. The area of union may be a county, district, state, or a wider region. By this means locals eliminate competition among themselves and secure the other advantages that centralization gives. In 1932 some 2,000 locals were embraced in 40 federations, totaling 160,000 farmers.⁶

The California Fruit Growers' Exchange, organized in 1895, was the first of this type. In it 192 locals were joined, first by districts and then in a state central. The local packs the fruit, the district exchange stores and ships it, and the central exchange sells the product. This plan had been copied by many other federations. One of the largest is the Land O' Lakes Creameries with 432 affiliated locals in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the Dakotas. Notable examples of federated purchasing associations are the Farm Bureau Coöperative Association (Ohio), and the Farmers' Union State Exchange (Nebraska).

⁶ Federal Farm Board, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

The rise of federations depends upon well-established local associations. They represent the slow integrations of local into larger units. Such integration necessitates the surrender of certain powers to the central agency. The real test of the strength of the co-operative motive would seem to lie in the measure to which it can be extended to secondary association.

The third type of coöperation is known as the *Large-Scale Centralized*, earlier called *Regional Associations*. Among the first of these was the California raisin-growers, formed in 1912. For a half-dozen years this type was confined to the Pacific coast; then it spread to other parts of the country until by 1932 there were some 130 associations with 900,000 members. The movement for regional organization was dominant for several years, giving co-operation a tremendous impetus.

Its method was to unite all the growers of a commodity, as grain, fruit, cotton, or tobacco, over a wide area. The members elected a central board of directors, who assumed full control of all business without much regard for the individual members. Growers signed contracts binding them to deliver their crop to the association for a period, say, of five to seven years. These were non-cancellable agreements and formed the chief bond of union.

These associations were promoted by an organizer, who would call mass meetings of farmers and persuade them to constitute the central organization. It was the work of artificial stimulation instead of natural growth. Thus associations were quickly formed of tens of thousands of members actuated chiefly by economic motives and without understanding of the essentials of coöperation. Their strength depended upon legal contract rather than personal contact relations. In this they differed from the federated type, which grows from the bottom up and rests on contact relations in local associations.

Since so much depended upon the contract, its purpose should be made clear. Back of it was the belief that farmers will accept co-operation if it can make money for them. Inasmuch as it was necessary for the organization to control most of the product, if it was to accomplish anything, the members had to be bound to de-

liver their produce, thus guaranteeing the organization for a period while it demonstrated the validity of coöperative marketing. To make their foundations sure, laws making the contracts enforceable were secured in most of the states.

The greatest difficulty the regionals encountered was contract-breaking. Where wholesale disloyalty arose, as it did in some areas, the associations went to pieces. Typical of the situation was the case of the Staple-Cotton Coöperative Association of Mississippi. During the first year 82.3 per cent of the members fulfilled their contracts, but in 1924-25 only 46.3 per cent did so.⁷ In the South this difficulty was partly due to the crop lien system. The bank, warehouse, or other holder of a mortgage could and did often prevent the tenant grower from delivering his crop to the coöperative. But there were other causes of disloyalty—among them unsatisfied profit motives and a revolt against autocratic control of the association. Therefore when membership contracts came up for renewal, the association might not be able to secure enough to continue business. This, for example, happened with the Connecticut Valley Tobacco Association in the spring of 1927.

In the face of these difficulties, the legal control method was gradually abandoned for one based on a short-term cancellable contract and an appeal to membership loyalty.⁸

At the outstart, the regionals disregarded local organization, but subsequently many of them found it expedient to foster locals. Such centers were found useful for keeping members informed on the association's work, for recruiting new members, inspiring loyalty, gathering facts, affording machinery to elect delegates, and in a few cases for improving social opportunities. The Burley Tobacco Growers' Coöperative Association of Lexington, Kentucky, was one of the first to establish locals. Its aim was declared to be: "The organization of members and their families into community groups for (1) serving as a medium thru which members could be more closely in touch with their association; (2) promoting an interest in the principles and methods of coöperative marketing; (3) fostering a spirit of neighborliness and goodwill as an asset to

⁷ *Rural America*, Feb., 1927; "A Review of 1926," p. 12.

⁸ *Ibid.*

the association and community life; (4) promoting coöperative enterprises for the enrichment and improvement of rural life.”⁹

The fourth type of association is known as *National and Regional Terminal Market Sales Agencies*. The first of the kind was the National Wool Warehouse and Storage Company, which began operating in Chicago in 1909, having been formed by 700 large-scale wool growers of the Rocky Mountain States; it lasted about 15 years. Since then many associations have been started for the sale of various products. These differ from private commission firms in that they return their profits to the membership.¹⁰ They operate not locally but in many markets. The Farm Board of 1929–1932 was instrumental in stimulating their growth.

A fifth type is found in the *Bargaining Associations*. These arose out of special needs in the case of commodities which are best sold directly from farm to manufacturer or distributor. Milk is the leading product involved, and the associations are found in the supply regions of many of the great cities.¹¹

The sixth type is that of the *Service Associations*. They include the organization of such services as processing plants, warehouses, fire and other property insurance, the generation and distribution of electricity, the construction and operation of telephone systems, the supplying of credit and the promotion of various other interests. For example, in 1934 there were 793 coöperatives for herd improvement; 5,000 farm loan and 559 production-credit associations; 1,900 farmers’ mutual fire insurance companies; and 50 associations for supplying members with electricity.¹² The tendency is for these forms of coöperation to expand.

Problems of Coöperative Organization

Several basic problems confront the coöperative movement.

1. The enforceable contract, already mentioned, is one. In 1924 some 60 per cent of marketing associations were operating on this

⁹ Quoted from report cited in *Rural America*, Jan., 1925, p. 8.

¹⁰ Federal Farm Board, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹² R. E. Elsworth, “Statistics of Farmers’ Coöperative Business Organizations,” Farm Credit Administration, *Bulletin No. 6*, May, 1936.

basis. It proved to be the undoing of many, for habits of voluntary association were not sufficiently developed to sustain them. In fact, antagonism was often generated where loyalty was needed.

The principle of coercion sometimes permeated whole communities. In one district of Kentucky, for example, the Burley Tobacco Growers' Association forced non-members to join in the following manner:

"The members of the Association in that community held a meeting one day and passed an official set of resolutions as follows:

" 'We will not associate with these non-members, and our wives will not associate with their wives. We will not lend them our tools and our machinery, and we will not exchange work with them. We will not trade with any store which will give them credit, nor will we do business with any bank which will lend them any money.' What would you imagine happened after that? Well, the story goes that the community was cleaned up in a hurry, and it is now 100 per cent loyal to the Burley Tobacco Growers' Association."¹³

So much antagonism and disloyalty were bred within the associations thru coercive measures that efforts to enforce contracts were gradually given up. By 1930 only 46 per cent of the marketing associations even retained them in form.

2. What shall be the scope of their functions is another problem confronting coöperative associations. They are business organizations, and most of them interpret their function to be business only. Some, however, concern themselves with other interests also, such as educational programs for the membership and for the community, affiliation with other farmers' social organizations, recreational activities, the promotion of other coöperatives, and the employment of social workers to help member families in local community work, public health and child welfare service.

It is clear that at least some of the associations recognize that everything human comes within their field, while a much larger number adhere strictly to business matters. Which policy is the sounder one sociologically?

Doubtless the business coöperatives are pursuing a sound policy

¹³ From "Mississippi Farm Bureau and Cotton Associated News," Dec. 15, 1923.

in emphasizing business only, but they may not find it practical to ignore community relations and obligations. Their members have other interests besides the economic. Rarely are all these interests adequately provided for in the farmers' community. Organization may be insufficient to supply them. Health, recreation, and child welfare—any or all—may be more or less neglected. So it becomes the duty of whatever organization is on the ground to look after the unsupplied needs of the community. Let the church, if it will, or the school, or the Farm Bureau; but if none is doing it, then let the coöperative, if it chances to have the opportunity, do what it can to supply the lack. Let it be all things to the community, under such circumstances. Normally, of course, it should stick exclusively to its business task if other agencies are performing the other functions. Even in communities where there is adequate organization of various interests, the coöperative should not hold aloof. It should correlate its work with all other organized activities. It should use its energies on behalf of every other specialized organization contributing to the social welfare. Separate in function but one in purpose, should be the aim of all social agencies.

3. A third problem of coöperative organization has to do with the profit motive. Almost nothing else has concerned the movement thus far. In itself this is legitimate enough, but in many instances it tends to defeat its own ends. Where profits are the goal, the farmer is going to take them thru the organization when it offers the most; but otherwise, when the organization does not, he will seek them of private dealers. Thus the organization is undermined by the loss of supporters enticed away by the very appeal upon which it relies to hold them. So long as immediate gain is the chief attraction, the organization cannot cope with disloyalty. Some deeper motive must be sought. Organization must spring from the knowledge that thru team work, power, independence and a more adequate social life are possible.

Effects of Coöperative Organization

Since the coöperative movement is practically confined to marketing farm products and buying supplies, its economic effects are

naturally the first to be noted. Three chief sources of gain in marketing are recognized: (1) the profits that middlemen would otherwise get, go to the farmer; (2) the cost of marketing is reduced; (3) old standards of marketing service are improved and new ones devised.¹⁴

Gain from the first source is not large. From the second source there are much greater returns; and from the third, the greatest of all.¹⁵ The better developed coöperatives have secured as much as 25 per cent increase in returns. It is doubtful, however, if claims for larger rewards can be substantiated.¹⁶ Even if these conservative estimates fully measure the financial benefits of coöperation, its worth is proved. However, its economic possibilities have not as yet been fully developed. Dealing essentially with questions of distribution, it has left the control of production untouched. Nevertheless, upon the control of production rests the control of prices, say the classical economists.

Until recently the coöperatives have been largely at the mercy of urban credit institutions. Selling pools formed by the coöperatives were financed on terms more profitable to the banks than to the farmers. Thus the coöperatives failed at a crucial point in the marketing process, not to mention their failure to extend control over the production and manufacturing end of the enterprise. More advantageous marketing, taken alone, obviously required farmers' coöperative credit and banking facilities. Under the Farm Credit Administration a system has been set up to meet the need. This has changed the entire situation. The Farm Credit Act of 1933 provided for the establishment of 12 regional banks thruout the country and a Central Bank for Coöperatives in Washington, D.C. This act was extended in 1935 to cover most of the credit needs of the marketing and purchasing associations. It has also been the means of promoting the organization of more than 2,500 coöperative credit unions. Thus the coöperatives have been freed from the control of urban financial interests.

¹⁴ "Financial Gains of Marketing Successfully through Coöperation," *The Annals*, Vol. 117, No. 206, p. 208.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 210, 213.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

The great success of coöperation among the Danish farmers has been due to the complete control of the process from producer to consumer. The following statement indicates how by a network of agencies this is done: "The farmer buys his necessities at his coöperative retail store. He borrows money and places his savings in a coöperative bank; his fertilizers, fodder, seeds, etc., are obtained from coöperative buying and import associations; his cement comes from the coöperative cement factory, and his electricity from a coöperative power plant. He delivers his milk to the coöperative dairy, his pigs to the coöperative slaughterhouse; his eggs to the Danish Coöperative Egg Export Co., and his cattle to the Danish Cattle Export Coöperative. It is usual for a farmer to be a member of at least half a dozen coöperative societies covering the entire range of his economic needs."¹⁷

The Danish coöperative bacon factories, for instance, control the production and marketing of hogs thru every stage until the meat reaches the consumer's table. They allow none of the profits to stray into the pockets of the non-farming class. In consequence they are able to show that from 70 to 75 per cent of what the consumer pays for meat is returned to the hog raiser. The American farmer, even with the best of the coöperatives, probably does not get more than 40 per cent of what the consumer pays. To get an all-embracing coöperation of farmers for farmers and by farmers in the United States is the thing needed. But to achieve it will mean a battle royal between country and city, for financial and industrial powers will fight to the bitter end to prevent such developments.

In reality, the kind of coöperative organization that will tell, requires a veritable new social order. That indeed the Danish farmers have brought about. They have established a coöperative commonwealth in which the chief rural interests are carried on in common. They have made the state a partner in their enterprises. The results are, not a nation of wealthy farmers, but one where they are prosperous, highly cultured and contented. When the American

¹⁷ Quoted from 1933 People's Year Book by J. G. Knapp and J. J. Lister, "Coöperative Purchasing of Farm Supplies," *Bulletin No. 1*. Farm Credit Administration, September, 1935, pp. 70-72.

coöperative movement becomes thoro-going, it too will initiate a social order for the re-making of rural America.

The effects of coöperative organization upon the individual and his community are not so tangible. They are more a matter of opinion than of fact. Is the individualistic mode of behavior in those areas participating in coöperatives giving way to a collectivistic attitude? The testimony of observers in local communities is to the effect that where coöperative marketing associations are successfully operating, people are more ready to engage in community enterprises than where there are no such organizations. This is what one would expect, but how extensive it is becoming, no one knows. Prof. C. C. Zimmerman has made a study of the effects of coöperation on the coöperators. He finds that the longer the time people are members, the more hearty they are in support of collective action.¹⁸

Eventually coöperation should spread to all sorts of enterprises having to do with social life. Unless it does this, its total effect upon rural society will not be very great.

Its effect upon communities as such remains to be seen. In Europe, coöperation grew out of and was the expression of compact community life. Community produced coöperation. In America it is to be hoped that coöperation may be fostered so that it will produce a vital community life among farmers. In fact, there is evidence that it is already beginning to do so.

Other General Types of Functional Organization

From the coöperatives we turn to other agencies serving various interests in rural society. A description of a number of the more important types will be useful. Schools, churches, and lodges will be left out of account in this connection. Attention will be given especially to those movements and associations that have local organizations.

The *first* general type we shall notice may be described as *National Farmers' Organizations*.

¹⁸ "Types of Farmers' Attitudes," *Jour. of Social Forces*, Vol. V, No. 4, pp. 591-596.

1. Of these the oldest is the Grange, or Patrons of Husbandry. It was organized in 1868 by O. H. Kelley, a government clerk in Washington, D.C., who had previously been a farmer in Iowa and Minnesota. As a remedy for the hard conditions among farmers of the South and West at the close of the Civil War, he conceived the idea of a secret society modeled after the Masonic Order, which should devote itself to the improvement of country life, and have as its aim reform by intellectual and social rather than political efforts. The first permanent society to be established among farmers was at Fredonia, New York. During the next four years, a few other locals were founded elsewhere. Then, in 1872, the farmers began to take interest in the movement and to flock to it in great numbers, until within the space of a year or two the Grange became established in every state of the Union with the exception of Rhode Island. By 1875 it had reached the zenith of its power, with upwards of 21,000 locals and three-quarters of a million members. It then began to decline as rapidly as it had grown. In a short space its numbers had fallen to barely 100,000. About 1890, however, there was a revival in the Northeastern section of the country. Since then it has grown until it has nearly as large a membership as it had in 1875. In 1938 the organization claimed 625,000 members in two-thirds of the states; the leading states in order of membership were New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New Hampshire. Thus, the Grange is found chiefly in the Northeastern part of the country.

The purpose of this agency is educational, social, legislative, and coöperative. Its weekly or fortnightly meetings are divided into business, lecture, and social periods. It has exerted much influence in securing the enactment of laws advantageous to rural interests. Among these are laws providing for railway regulation, as the Interstate Commerce Commission Act, and laws for the improvement of Agricultural Colleges and for numerous other beneficial measures. One praiseworthy cause championed by it was that of equal rights for women. This it put to practice in its lodges. Today the Grange seems to be more distinctly social than anything else. It is an association of the more prosperous and self-satisfied farmers who

have a tendency to oppose new policies and programs for rural society. Its chief work is educational and social.

2. The Gleaners is another organization of this national group. It arose in 1894 in Michigan. Like the Grange, it is a fraternal order. Its aim is to foster coöperation in buying and selling and to further the welfare of its members thru various benevolences. The region of its operation is confined to Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Iowa. A few years ago it claimed 1,000 locals, with 80,000 members.

3. The American Society of Equity, and the Farmers' Equity Union are two factions of another organization. The Equity society was started in Indiana in 1902. It sought economic protection for the farmer as the foremost object, but it was concerned about more equitable conditions for the laboring masses also. The movement was frankly class-conscious and closely akin to the labor union. It has made use of the union label and advocated coöperation with the American Federation of Labor. In the space of four years, organizations had been founded in thirteen states, chiefly in the North and West. In 1910 the society split into two factions, as indicated above. Both are distinctively business associations, with no great difference in their activities. If anything, the first mentioned society emphasizes marketing more than the second, which stresses purchasing supplies also. The first society has specialized in handling various products according to the needs of the sections in which it is working. The second makes each local or exchange a joint share company in which the members hold stock. It maintains stores, elevators and warehouses. The union is small. It is found in ten states, chiefly in the central region, with Ohio and Illinois leading.

4. The Farmers' Educational and Coöperative Union is to the South what the Grange and Gleaners are to the North and East. The local of this Union is all-important. Its activities are economic, fraternal, educational and political. It has undertaken numerous enterprises connected with marketing, manufacturing and storing farm products. The organization was started in Texas in the same year the Equity society arose in Indiana. The founder was Newton Gresham, who, like other originators of similar organizations, was

moved by the hard lot of the farmers. It was the cotton growers that concerned him immediately. He hoped to improve their condition by means of his Unions. The idea spread rapidly and in eight years there were locals in twenty-seven states. The movement continued to grow thruout the next decade, with the center of its influence shifting from Texas to the South Atlantic states and then toward the West South Central. At present Nebraska, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas and Kansas, in the order named, take the lead among the nineteen or twenty states where the Union has any strength. The organization claims to have locals in thirty-one states, but the membership waxes and wanes from year to year, judged by the number who pay dues. The number was once very large, variously estimated from one to three millions, but now it is reported to be 200,000.

Another general type of organizations consists of *those fostered by the Federal Government*.

1. The Farm Bureau is the foremost representative of this group. It is a local association of farm families devoting itself to all aspects of the farm problem. The unit of organization is sometimes a neighborhood or township, but there is usually a county Farm Bureau which is the administrative unit. Where neighborhood locals prevail, the County Farm Bureau is made up of the chairmen of the locals, with an occasional general meeting of all members in the county. The counties unite in a State Bureau thru delegates, and the states in turn have formed a national Farm Bureau Federation. The latter was formed of 12 states in 1920. Today it embraces 39 states.

This organization is classified as governmental for the reason it was originally fostered by the Agricultural Extension Service and state appropriations. At the present time its relation to the government varies widely from state to state. In some instances, County Farm Bureaus are required as mediums in the appropriation of state funds for the county agents' support. In the main, however, they are financially independent of the Extension Service and state control. Coöperation with the government is voluntary, chiefly thru the Land-Grant Colleges.

The Farm Bureau idea originated independently in Broome County, New York; Bedford County, Pennsylvania, and Pettis County, Missouri, at about the same time. The Smith-Lever Act for the support of county agents became the chief stimulus to the movement, since in the Northern states generally the Bureau was established to support the agents' work. In the South the Bureau did not develop so generally as elsewhere. At its full tide, from 80 to 90 per cent of the counties having agents had Farm Bureaus also. That meant over 1,800 of the 3,000 counties of the United States were organized before the depression. After a period of shrinkage, the Bureau is growing again. In 1939 it reported about 400,000 members, whereas it once claimed 600,000. The Bureau's own figures do not agree with a careful analysis made by Ralph Russell, who believes the maximum membership reached in 1930 was 321,203. In 1933 it fell to the low point of 158,356. The leading states in average membership from 1926-1935 were Iowa, Illinois, New York, Indiana, California, Ohio, Minnesota, and Alabama in the order mentioned. Obviously it is a very unevenly distributed organization, ranging from an average for the ten-year period mentioned of 48,249 in Iowa to 710 in Nebraska, with a number of states having none at all.¹⁹

This organization is the most effective of all farmers' associations. It has united local groups with the state and federal departments of agriculture and the agricultural colleges, to make the services of these agencies available to the farmer as never before. From these sources information and other assistance flow freely to the local community. The Bureau has been the greatest force in promoting the coöperative movement. In this respect it ran away from governmental control. The Farm Bloc, which held the balance of power in Congress under the Harding administration, was directly traceable to the Bureau's influence. Altho claiming interest in whatever concerns farm life, it must be said that the Bureau too often ignores everything but economic interests. Its growth seems to have weakened other farmers' organizations, not so much per-

¹⁹ Ralph Russell, "Membership of the American Farm Bureau Federation 1926-1935," *Rural Sociology*, March, 1937, pp. 29-35.

haps because of opposition as because of a more effective program.

2. Boys' and Girls' 4-H Clubs are developments of the extension service provided for in the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, and the Capper-Ketcham Act of 1928. These clubs are constituted of local groups of boys or girls ranging from ten to twenty-one years of age. A club is usually a group of ten to twenty individuals who are working at some project, as, growing plants, fruits or animals; canning products; preparing clothing; keeping accounts; making things needed on the farm; or doing something else connected with the life of the farm home. In 1937 the enrollment in major enterprises was as follows: foods, 492,882; clothing, 412,974; farm and home management, 241,275; gardening, 224,448; health and sanitation, 217,934; livestock, 157,800; horticulture, 149,181; poultry, 132,002; farm crops, 105,592; dairy, 52,533; cotton, 45,099; forestry and wild life, 35,745; agricultural engineering, 13,010.²⁰ The groups have adult leaders and meet to discuss their work, give demonstrations, play games, engage in musical and dramatic activities, attend camps and fairs, and pursue various other stimulating interests. They aim to become educated by doing, and thus to produce a more capable generation of farm folks. At the outstart the Club work was organized almost wholly on a project basis with a view to teaching youths and adults better farm and home practices. With that idea uppermost, the tendency was to sacrifice the development of the youth for the sake of the project. False ideals were set up by putting too much stress on prize winning. A decided change in recent years has given emphasis to the all-round development of the boys and girls. Thru a wide variety of activities, qualities of sociability and leadership are being developed. T. L. Harris says of the clubs of West Virginia: "In 90 per cent of the cases studied, Four-H members were found more active in the social and recreational life of the community than other young people of the same age."²¹

The Club membership has grown from 562,046 in 1925 to about

²⁰ C. A. Sheffield, "Coöperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics," *Extension Service Circular No. 297*, Dec., 1938, p. 4.

²¹ T. L. Harris, "Four-H Club Work in West Virginia," *West Virginia Agr. Exp. Station, Bulletin No. 241*, p. 12.

1,300,000 at present. The Clubs completed about 1,250,000 projects in agriculture and home economics in 1935. However, the number enrolled is only a small part of the boys and girls of club age on the farms.

A *third* general class of organizations are *various kinds of national societies* not primarily interested in things rural but nevertheless giving some attention to country problems.

1. The Parent-Teachers' Association is one. It has locals made up of teachers and school patrons in rural communities of nearly every state. They devote themselves to the improvement of school and home relationships, and to promoting child health and welfare.

2. The American Red Cross has local associations in some small towns and villages and thus touches in a limited way the open country people.

The chief work of the Red Cross involves public health nursing, family case work, recreation, and community improvement projects.

3. The Playground and Recreation Association of America, altho essentially urban, has in a slight measure touched village communities. It is mentioned here more because it is an available agency than because of its actual work.

4. The Young Men's Christian Association, and the Young Women's Christian Association are other organizations with a rural program. The Rural Y.M.C.A. dates its beginning from 1873, when two counties organizations were formed in Illinois. By 1920 it claimed 224 county organizations in 26 states. In 1936 there were but 93 county associations in 23 states. The membership was reported to be 43,234. The associations have risen and fallen with the ups and downs of rural economic conditions. Various activities of an educational, recreational and sociable nature are sponsored by the associations. It organizes high school boys into what are called "Hi-Y" clubs, standing for the ideals of the "Y." Summer camps and athletics also are promoted.

The "Y. W." has a somewhat similar program for girls, but rarely gets outside of fair-sized towns. It is therefore all but negligible insofar as the distinctively rural field is concerned.

5. The Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls are organizations for boys and girls in their teens. The first mentioned reports 6,000 troops, and the third, 25 per cent of its membership in rural communities. They endeavor to train in nature study, outdoor life, health habits, handicrafts, and patriotic attitudes. The locals of these organizations are found in rural villages, but make only a very limited appeal indeed to open country boys and girls.

A *fourth* major class of organizations are *purely local associations*.

1. Farmers' clubs are the most important of this group. They are very numerous thruout the West North Central States especially from Wisconsin to Montana.²² It is probable that in general they exceed in number all other organizations that come under the four groups mentioned. They are of a miscellaneous nature, covering a wide variety of activities. There are those interested in production, marketing, financing and purchasing. Examples of these are "Cow-testing associations," "Threshing-rings," and "Purchasing Clubs." Another group are those given to culture, recreation, and welfare interests. Such names as "Welfare Association," "Mothers' Club," "Literary Society," "Singing Society," "Farmers' Association," "Community Club," "Picnic Club," and just "Farmers' Club" appear. Some have serious interests and others are devoted to social and recreational activities. They frequently center in small villages. They tend to units in county federations.²³

2. Coöperative Locals fall under this class. These include both the distinctively local associations and locals of Regional Coöperative Marketing Associations. There is a growing tendency to establish the latter. Where this is being done, the club becomes interested in community welfare projects.

3. Farm Women's Clubs constitute another group. These are listed separately, since in some states they form a distinct group apart from Farmers' Clubs. In a few instances they have joined

²² E. A. Willson, "Rural Community Clubs in North Dakota," North Dakota Agr. College, Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 251*, Aug., 1931.

²³ J. W. Barger, "The Rural Community Club in Montana," *Bulletin No. 224*, University of Montana Agr. Exp. Station, Jan., 1930.

the State Federation of Women's Clubs or have formed a federation of their own. An instance of the latter is found in Ohio, where 103 locals formed a state federation of their own.²⁴

The four general classes of organizations described include the chief available forms in rural districts. We have cited the most important representatives of each type. There are doubtless organizations confined to particular states or localities which we have not taken into account and certain ones that are fairly general, such as the Townsend Clubs, which we have not thought it worth while to describe. In the main our list gives the organizational resources of the country.

4. Village improvement associations are found in New England and the Northeastern States in many localities. They are special interest organizations confined to villages and concerned with community planning, recreation, and other local matters.

5. Community House Associations have arisen in various parts of the country during the past twenty years for the purpose of securing and maintaining suitable buildings for community activities. Such associations are often effective local organizations thru which people express themselves. In both the open country and villages this type of organization seems to be on the increase. Rural community centers and buildings are being developed as a result.²⁵

Among special interest organizations there tend to be duplication and overlapping, resulting in unnecessary competition and waste. The problem of community efficiency therefore arises. It is that to which we now come.

If in forming groups to meet their needs people acted with social wisdom and foresight, they would not multiply special interest groups engaged in the same activities while other needs suffered. It so happens, however, that rural communities, open country and village alike, have developed in a purely haphazard fashion. There has rarely been any engineering of the enterprise on the part of the whole for the larger good. Private, special, rival caprice instead of

²⁴ C. E. Lively, "Some Rural Social Agencies in Ohio," *Ohio State University Extension Bulletin No. 4*, Vol. 18.

²⁵ Blanche Halbert, "Community Buildings for Farm Families," *Farmers' Bulletin No. 1804*, U.S.D.A., Sept., 1938.

public, general, harmonious plan has run riot. So there arises the problem of how to secure collectivity for general community ends where people are organized in many special interest groups.

The answer is found in what is called community organization as distinguished from special interest organization. It involves the correlation and harmonization of all organized agencies of the community, so that they may act unitedly in all that concerns the collective life. The aim is communal welfare, or, as A. R. Mann has put it: "It is to relate the forces, organized and unorganized within a community . . . that the best economic and social standards of that unity shall be maintained, and that intelligent direction and continuing united effort shall be brought to bear upon the essential economic and social needs so that they shall be promoted toward well-considered goals."²⁶

Community organization calls for some sort of centralized agency or council. There are different ways of securing this. One provides for a directorate chosen at large by a meeting of the whole community. Special interest organizations, as such, are ignored in selecting the body. Once chosen, the council creates committees to look after the various interests. Thru these an effort is made to get the coöperation of all agencies in a common program. This plan might work under favorable conditions, but it is faulty in that it ignores the existing adherence of individuals to special interest groups, lacks any definite integration of these groups as groups, and tends to be just another organization of the special interest class instead of an all-embracing agency.²⁷

A second form of council is secured where representatives of the several organizations sit in a central body. Members not identified with any special agency are not sought. The plan is thus a scheme of federation. This council, like the first, may carry on its work thru special interest committees, seeking to unite all organizations with similar interests in common undertakings. Here again there is weakness, for the first allegiance of each member of the federation

²⁶ Address July 4, 1918, before National Community Center Association.

²⁷ Dwight Sanderson, "Some Fundamentals of Rural Community Organization," *Proceedings Third National Country Life Conference*, 1920, pp. 74-76.

is to the organization he represents and not to the federation. Moreover, the federation is of agencies only and not that of interests.²⁸

A third type is secured by combining the first two, that is, by uniting in a central body both representatives of organizations as such and members elected at large for the whole community. This plan was worked out in application to rural communities by Morgan and Butterfield at the Massachusetts Agricultural College, and applied in a few towns of that state.²⁹ It has all the advantages of the first two types and avoids most of their faults.

A fourth type has been proposed by Professor Dwight Sander-son. His plan calls for a council made up of representatives of common interests rather than of existing organizations. Figure 69 reveals the scheme in detail.

It will be observed that the special interest committees are basic. Each is composed of accredited delegates of all organizations having anything to do with the given interest. This means that any organization may be represented on several committees, for obviously many existing agencies are not so highly specialized as to be mutually exclusive. Thus, the committee on Recreation and Social Life might be composed of delegates from a dozen or more organizations, if perchance there were so many in the community giving some attention to this interest. In the assumed case of the diagram, we have the lodges, Boy Scouts, Athletic Club, Musical Associations, Grange, Churches, School Board, Parent-Teachers' Association, the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. In a community of few agencies a single organization would often furnish the special interest committees.

The council proper is then made up of the chairmen of the committees and an equal number elected at an annual meeting of the community. In this way it is developed out of the fundamental concerns of the community and not from the activities of organizations and interested persons.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ E. L. Morgan, "Mobilizing the Rural Community," The Massachusetts Agricultural College, *Extension Bulletin No. 23*.

These schemes are better on paper than in operation. As a matter of fact, there are very few open country or village communities where they are in use. The Institute of Social and Religious Research reported no councils in its 1924 survey of 140 villages, and only one case in all its rural studies where such a scheme was successfully functioning.³⁰ In Massachusetts, despite years of faithful effort on the part of a field specialist in organization, no enduring council was established in any town.³¹ In 1928 a federation of the Blacksburg, Virginia, trade-center community was organized and still continues in successful operation.³² A Western New York village of some 600 or more population is reported to have had a Community Council of the Massachusetts type actively at work since 1921.³³ In Missouri following 1923, councils were set up in 110 communities, but in 1936 only 26 were reported to be active.³⁴

What hinders an extensive development of such highly desirable enterprises? Leaving out of consideration the lack of knowledge of such schemes, there are a number of difficulties in the way.

1. One is little feeling of need. Sanderson thinks that people do not desire community organization until they realize that special agencies are not achieving results wanted. Even conflict and antagonisms that consume their energies may be enjoyed and perpetuated until some needed end cannot be attained without joint action. When a community itself discovers its failings, then it may be prepared to act unitedly.³⁵ But communities, like individuals, do not habitually see their own faults and set out to remedy them.

2. A second cause is lack of socially-minded leaders who will point out the unmet needs calling for joint action and arouse the various agencies to enlist in the joint enterprise.³⁶

³⁰ Brunner, Hughes, and Patten, *American Agricultural Villages*, footnote, p. 206.

³¹ Sanderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.

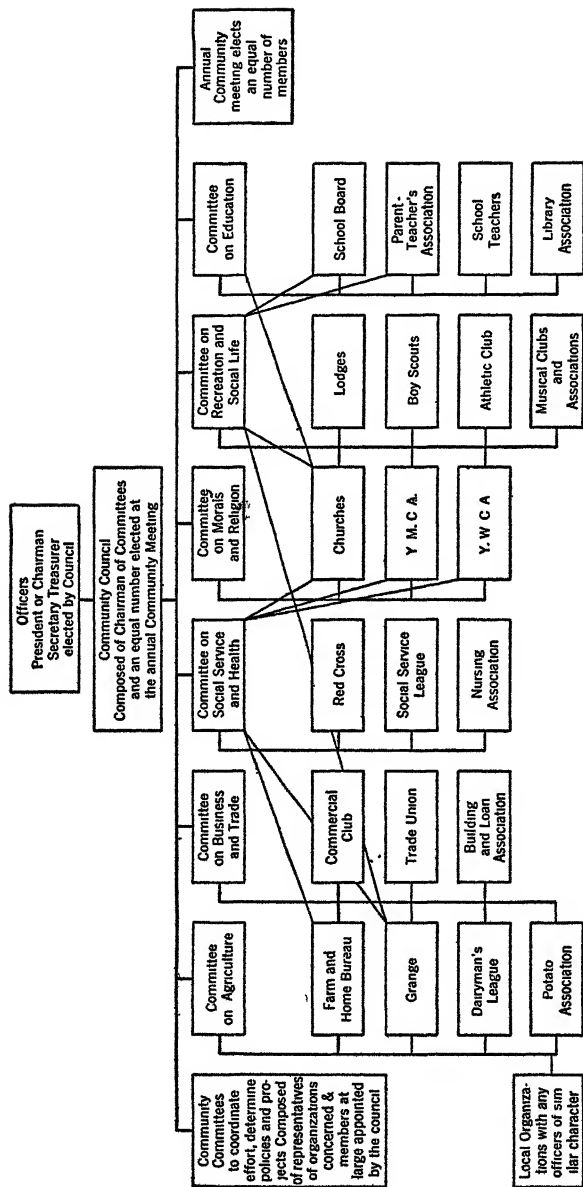
³² W. E. Garnett, "A Social Study of the Blacksburg Community," *Bulletin No. 299*, Virginia Agr. Exp. Station, August, 1935.

³³ Sanderson, Dwight, and Polson, R. A., *Rural Community Organization*, John Wiley and Sons, 1939, p. 168.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

³⁵ Sanderson, Dwight, "Some Fundamentals of Rural Community Organization," *Proceedings Third National Country Life Conference*, 1920, pp. 74-76.

³⁶ *Ibid.*



69. Suggested Plan of Organization for a Community Council

Source: Dwight Sanderson, "Some Fundamentals of Rural Community Organization," *Proceedings Third National Country Life Conference*, 1920, p. 67. University of Chicago Press, 1921.

3. But given a feeling of need and leaders, the scheme may not work. For every coördinating enterprise must have a program. It must somehow get it into action and keep at it or else failure will follow. The purpose of the several committees is, of course, to push each interest. But it is a rare community that has enough capable people to man five or six committees. They will not ordinarily be specialists in any line of leadership, nor will they have the time required for the work. The result will be one or two active committees and a number of dead ones. Thus the program breaks down and the coördinating scheme comes to nought.

4. Another difficulty lies in the artificiality inherent in such organization. The constituent agencies are mostly natural functional groups and the bond by which they are united in committees is at best only a program of projects. As such it is always in danger of being looked upon as something artificial, and, however important, will have enough of the artificial about it to render it insecure. If the committee finds no work to do or does not succeed in doing any, its bond is quickly dissolved.

These strictures on community organization are presented to explain why it has failed to take root, not to condemn the idea. In cities, where there are abundant talent and funds to be had for hiring specialists, organizations can be coördinated in this manner. Chambers of Commerce are, as a matter of fact, organized with project committees, which carry thru successful programs. Even special interest organizations like the Farm Bureau find it possible to have project committees working on their problems. But to integrate a whole community seems to be quite another matter. It is somewhat like uniting independent nations in a world federation—something highly intriguing, easily planned, but most difficult of realization.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Are there any limits to the application of coöperative methods in the economic and business sphere of farming?
2. What are chief weaknesses and limitations of farmers' coöperatives in America? How may these be overcome?
3. Which of the several types of organization mentioned in the chapter is the most vital and effective in your community?
4. How far are the programs of the various organizations of your community distinctive and how far are they similar?
5. Is there any difference in the class of people who are members of the Grange, the Farm Bureau, the Farmers' Union, and the Coöperative Marketing Association of your community? If so, how do you account for it?
6. To what extent do the various organizations of your community engage in activities or have a program reaching beyond the main objects for which they exist? Why the broader program?
7. What are the chief merits and demerits of the 4-H Club work of your community?
8. In what ways would a community council be useful in your community? What would hinder or oppose such an organization?
9. Have the organizations of your community undergone change in recent years? If so, to what changed social or economic conditions can the transformation be traced?
10. Are there any organization changes in rural communities with which you are familiar that can be attributed to new means of communication?

FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION— PRINCIPLES AND PROBLEMS

The Nature of Social Organization

SOcial organization is structure, or formalized modes of acting together. Thus E. C. Hayes says, "Organization is the purposefully correlated activities of people." Or "a set of differentiated activities serving a common purpose and so correlated that the effectiveness of each is increased by its relation to the rest."¹

Structure includes passive as well as dynamic conditions. People occupy positions with respect to one another, as in the layout of a village or the plot of a farming area. This sort of relationship is just as much organization, even tho people are not acting together, as are their correlated activities.

Naturally, many degrees and forms of organized relations present themselves in a complex social order. They may be transient, easily formed and quickly dissolved; or they may be relatively fixed. In the latter case we have institutions. As society grows in numbers and complexity, organization tends to become increasingly institutionalized.

There are various types of organizations, viewed from the standpoint of methods of relating persons and activities. Two general types are found springing from the nature of the people and their capacities.

1. One results where people are alike and have like interests. Under such conditions there is a consciousness of likeness, and activities will be correlated sympathetically. This is the basis of all mutual aid relation and coöperative organization.

2. A second type is found where people are different and are

¹ E. C. Hayes, *Introduction to the Study of Sociology*, pp. 409-410.

aware of the fact. In this case, organization does not arise naturally, but artificially, whenever people perceive that advantage may be gained by combining efforts. There will in turn be different varieties of these advantage forms, according to who perceives and who seeks the advantage, and the end to be sought in united action. At least three varieties will appear. (1) If all see the advantage in some measure, they will likely correlate their activities on the basis of equality. All will share and share alike in controlling the organization, even tho their functions differ ever so widely. This gives democratic organization. There is a good deal of this in local community association. (2) If all do not perceive the advantage of combined effort, there may still be correlation of activities, but with the organizing group only seeing the utility and coercing others to act in conjunction with them. For instance, a health organization is sometimes of this nature, compelling many unwilling people to join in quarantine and sanitary measures. Not infrequently farmers have fallen into this mode in other matters, under organization names that belie their true type. Some of the Regional Coöperatives have closely approached this form. (3) A third type appears where only a few see the advantage and are the chief gainers. The participation of the others comes in this case, not by coercion but rather thru inducement. For wages or rewards they will join in. They have nothing to say about the purpose or the direction of the activities. Such organization may be advantageous to the many, or it may exploit them ruthlessly. The Southern plantation system approximates this type of structure.

The Function of Organization

One function is the conservation of social energy, releasing vital resources for other purposes instead of necessitating their expenditure for structure making. In the *second place*, organization makes possible the accomplishment of ends otherwise impossible. The activities of large numbers of people can obviously be applied to a common task only thru some mechanism. *A third function* of or-

ganization has to do with the development of personality. It is thru correlated activities mainly that sociality is acquired. The ordinary person, untrained in associational relations, is like the horse unbroken to the team; he is uncomfortable when hitched with his fellows, will not pull at all, or wants to lunge ahead in his own way and in the direction of his own choosing. The "we feeling" that every complete personality must have, is largely the consequence of membership in various groups and institutions. Besides conserving social energy, facilitating the accomplishment of tasks by numerous individuals and developing personality, a *fourth function* is to stabilize relations. The more human relations fall into fixed forms, the less friction and change there will normally be in any social order. So much structure may indeed spring up that stability is secured at the expense of progress, hence there may be too much organization or not enough. Whether a given structural development is enough or too much depends upon whether or not the necessary and desirable tasks of the group are being accomplished with the least possible effort, and whether the proper balance between stability and change is being maintained. An over-organized society is quite as inefficient as an underorganized one. In both cases there is waste.

The rural community very frequently suffers from underorganization. There is not enough correlated effort to care for its vital needs and to promote its best interests. So true is this that organization has often been proposed as the panacea for all the ills of rural life. Again and again movements have been launched to further a more perfect organization of the farmers on a nation-wide scale. On the other hand, there are rural communities with too much social machinery. They are quite as bad off as communities with too little. The country village is generally the chief wastrel in this regard. In cases of overorganization, the trouble is usually too much of one or two kinds of structure with a deficiency of other kinds. The excess is commonly in religious and economic organization. Thus, in one way or another the ordinary rural community presents organizational problems.

Personality and Organization

Persons are the beginning and the end of all things social. They have created organization to serve them. If by any process or under any circumstance they become the means and structure the end, it is time for a social revolution to emancipate the victims. There may likewise be too much tradition and too much wealth for the human good, but there is far less likelihood of this, and far less danger from such a situation, than from an overplus of structure. An analysis of personality in conjunction with structure will make clear our meaning.

There are two theories of personality as it is related to organization. One may be called the theory of *realization* and the other of *suppression*.

The realization theory holds that one magnifies and enhances his personality by means of social organizations. J. K. Hart has stated the case thus: "Every membership in a new group brings some distinctive new touch to the personality of the individual. The group life seizes upon that part of his nature which responds to the group appeal, lifts it out of the inert mass of his sluggish personality, gives it color, warmth, life, appreciation and enables it to grow. On that side of his nature, he becomes a more complete human being. If he can find his way completely around the range of humanizing groups, he will thus find his way around and into all distinctive phases of humanity, he will become a complete human being. At least he will have all the facets of the complete human being."²

Even more can be said than is implied in the above statement. A society with many organizations offers freedom of choice to the socius; aye more, it requires him to make choice and thus assert himself. Thus self-determination and initiative are secured; there is freedom for the individual, which is not the case otherwise. When, therefore, modern society, with its multiple structure, is contrasted with Mediæval, where but two or three all embracing and dominating organizations held sway, the advantage lies alto-

² J. K. Hart, "Belonging to Too Many Groups," *The Survey*, March 15, 1924.

gether with the modern in giving conditions favorable to the development of personality. The great individualizing process of history is directly tied up with the growth of organization. The man of the Middle Ages was stultified by his guild, the church, and the state, which absorbed his whole personality. The modern man is emancipated by the necessity of adjusting himself to scores of institutions and modes of organized relations, among which he is required to divide himself. In this respect he is the gainer.³

The suppression theory of organization holds that it tends to destroy personality, and that membership should therefore be avoided as much as is humanly possible. It is contended that to the extent one belongs to institutions, he is cramped and narrowed, for they impose restrictions, obligations, stereotyped patterns of behavior to make us "play out our lives as if we were but acting a part which some one assigned to us."⁴ Under such conditions, it may be argued, there is no freedom, no individuality, but only subservience and deadening conformity. Rabindranath Tagore in his visit to the Western nations a few years ago was impressed with the prevalence of such evil consequence of our highly organized life. He said "Man is reducing himself to his minimum in order to make ample room for his organizations." Certainly, our modern city life, clutching, as it does, so many in almost endless forms of association, all but destroys one side of personality.

The question generally turns upon the amount of organization in which one participates rather than upon the fact of organization, altho it is true that, at least for some, non-participation in any formal association or institutional life is the only safeguard. As Professor Ross says, "There ought always to be reserved a large place for those who in organization feel like squirrels in cages, those to whom freedom and spontaneity are the breath of life. Society should leave a broad footing for the solitary worker who labors when and where and as he pleases."⁵

The undoing of self by membership in too many groups is seen,

³ For a fuller treatment of this subject see the author's *Society and Its Surplus*, Chaps. VI, VII.

⁴ E. D. Martin, *The Behavior of Crowds*, p. 164.

⁵ E. A. Ross, *Outlines of Sociology*, p. 199.

for instance, in the case of "joiners," who are found in every community where many organizations prevail. Such individuals have dissipated themselves in memberships to the point of demoralization. To quote Hart again, "The joiner has passed the maximum advantage and is in the disintegrating scale. Every new group that takes him in but adds to his complete demoralization. He has no time nor energy nor mind for anything that the group might profit him in personality, he takes in the 'horse play' of the new group, and misses all its vital qualities." ⁶

Each of the theories emphasizes an important truth. We need to evaluate them in relation to the open country people. On the whole and until of late country people have lived in neighborhoods with only a minimum of organization. Often the family was the sole group in which they participated. What of the consequences? Have we a type with undeveloped personalities or, instead, with exceptionally full and rich ones? On the basis of the realization theory, we should not expect much of farmers as a class. On the basis of the suppression theory, we should expect the farm people to have singularly rich personalities. As a matter of fact, neither type is found in the extreme.

To be sure, the farmer is described as highly individualistic. But this individualism does not imply richness and fullness of personality. In fact, it does not imply individuality at all in the true social sense. Just why this is so, we shall explain.

By sociality is meant a state of participating in, union with, a sharing of, and adjustment to the common life of the social order. By individuality is meant the quality of being autonomous, self-directive, of experiencing distinct self-valuation.⁷ Country people have an overdeveloped sense of self. There is independence and self-direction and uniqueness of a kind that is often intense, dogmatic, stubborn, bigoted and lacking in balance. There is ability to make choices and reject them; but power to do it sanely with reference to a wide range of options is not so evident. It is an individuality born of relative isolation rather than of choices. This, I suppose, is one of the chief consequences of meager associational life in country

⁶ *Op. cit.*

⁷ N. L. Sims, *Society and Its Surplus*, p. 258.

districts. Such individuality has strength but also weakness for want of that balance which comes from the necessity of finding one's way in the organizational maze of an urban environment. Doubtless, for the ordinary man, the danger of having individuality undeveloped or squeezed out, as well as the chance of attaining a better balanced selfhood, is greater in the urban world than in the open country of America. The average man in the city is likely to become a colorless, conforming nonentity compared with the countryman. There are, of course, other factors besides organization that are partly responsible for the differences, but our interest lies in emphasizing the importance of the organizational. On the other hand, there are possibilities of attaining a higher type of individuality in the city than in the country.

On the side of sociality, personality in the country falls short, even as it tends to the extreme in the city. Meager organization has not afforded opportunity for socialization. The sense of unity with fellows is singularly weak. As a consequence, countrymen have found it difficult to meet the demands of a society requiring an increasing amount of organization. Not all rural communities are structurally impoverished nor are all countrymen equally unsocialized. We therefore find abundant organization rising in many sections. But as a general fact, more highly developed organization is a necessity for rural society, if there is to rise a generation of country folks with full and well-balanced personalities.

As interest grouping largely devoid of the primary features of the local neighborhood develops thruout the land, as it is doing, and the majority of rural people become participants in it, the personality type of the country will undergo change. The farmer will become better socialized and the differences between him and the cityman will grow less.

Adequate Organization

Two especially important criteria for judging the adequacy of organization have been mentioned. One is its sufficiency relative to the needs of the community; the other is its sufficiency for the de-

velopment of personality. We can only generalize as to the needs of communities, as a great many factors enter to make the needs widely different.

Needs imply human interests. Of these there are a few major ones, such as those associated with sex, food, health, wealth, religion, education, recreation, social and æsthetic demands. A community may be judged as to whether they are met or not.

Hawthorn has taken a classification from R. Shepherd's *Essentials of Community*, and set over against each item the appropriate organizations or institutions thru which the interests express themselves.⁸ Following his method, a more complete table has been arranged.

Health	Community Health Service, Red Cross.
Parenthood	Child Welfare Association, Parent-Teacher Association.
Religion	The Church.
Fraternity	Farmers' Clubs, Lodges.
Education	The School, The Library, Literary, Debating and Study Clubs.
Agriculture	The Farm Bureau, The Grange, Equity Society, The Gleaners, The Farmers' Union.
Business	The Coöperative Marketing and Purchasing Association, together with organizations mentioned under Agriculture.
Citizenship	The Civic League, League of Woman Voters, Tax-payers' Association.
Adolescence . . .	Boys' and Girls' 4-H Clubs.
Recreation	Playground and Recreation Association, Athletic Club.
Æsthetic	Community Improvement Association.

How far rural communities are supplied with organizations has been disclosed by a number of studies. In Ohio Lively found organization to be altogether inadequate in a very large proportion of them. He chose twenty agencies, exclusive of schools, churches,

⁸ H. B. Hawthorn, *The Sociology of Rural Life*, p. 440. See also J. H. Kolb and A. F. Wileden, "Special Interest Groups in Rural Society," University of Wisconsin Agr. Exp. Station, *Research Bulletin No. 84*, 1927; D. E. Lindstrom, "Local Group Organization Among Illinois Farm People," University of Illinois Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 392*, 1933.

health and business organizations, and studied the frequency of their appearance in the trade area communities of the state. He found an average of three agencies to each community. Doubtless all these communities had schools and churches also, which, if added, would make an average of five organizations to the community. However, nearly 13 per cent of the communities had no organizations included in this list. Another 17 per cent had but one; 14 per cent had two; and over 11 per cent had just three. Thus more than half of the trade areas did not possess more than five or six organizations thru which the basic interests were being met. Less than 20 per cent of the communities reported seven or more of the list.⁹

Thus it appears that there are low and high areas of organization.

From this and other studies in Wisconsin,¹⁰ Pennsylvania,¹¹ and Iowa,¹² it would seem that only a small proportion of the communities were sufficiently organized, or if so organized, were actually rendering services that reached nearly all the people in the community. For, apart from the number of organizations, a truer index is the extent to which people make use of them. Field studies reveal that participation is often meager. W. E. Garnett found in Virginia that less than 20 per cent of the rural people were actually affiliated with organizations. He sets down a long list of specific problems covering all the basic interests which are evidently in need of organized effort.¹³ Kirkpatrick and Kolb found in Wisconsin that 16 per cent of the families in the high organization areas and 42 per cent in the low were not members of or-

⁹ C. E. Lively, "Some Rural Agencies in Ohio," Ohio State University, *Extension Service, Bulletin No. 4*, Vol. 28, 1922-23.

¹⁰ E. L. Kirkpatrick and J. H. Kolb, "Rural Organizations and the Farm Family," University of Wisconsin Agr. Exp. Station, *Research Bulletin No. 96*, Nov., 1929.

¹¹ H. J. Bonser, "Social Life in Crooked Creek Area," Pa. State College, School of Agriculture and Experiment Station in Coöperation with U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service, *Bulletin No. 345*, May, 1937.

¹² R. E. Wakely and J. E. Losey, "Rural Organization and Land Utilization on Muscatine Island," Iowa Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 352*, December, 1936.

¹³ W. E. Garnett, "Rural Organizations in Relation to Rural Life in Virginia," Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 256*, 1927, pp. 27-28.

ganizations. When individuals over 10 years of age were counted, it was one-fourth in the high and two-thirds in the low that did not affiliate.¹⁴ H. J. Bonser's survey in Pennsylvania disclosed the fact that three-fifths of the farmers in the area canvassed were participants only in the church. Only one-fourth attended church and one or more additional organizations.¹⁵ Wakeley and Losey report 65.7 per cent of the farm and non-farm families of the Iowa area survey participated in no organizations; 16 per cent, in one or two; 11.8 per cent, in three or four; and 6.4 per cent, in five or more.¹⁶

It is not reasonable to think that the people who do not make use of organizations in their communities have their needs provided for otherwise, nor that where many organizations are wanting, a few agencies are rendering exceptional service. If these studies are at all typical of existing conditions, they definitely indicate the fact of great organizational inadequacy.

Apart from the data before us, there is no way of estimating how far organization is sufficient for the development of socialized personalities. Attitudes reflect the type of man. Therefore the extent to which a negative or weak "we feeling" is shown, may be taken as an index of the efficacy of organization. If, therefore, but a small per cent of the farmers actively participate in organized activities, it appears there is a wide-spread personality deficiency.

The Basis and Characteristics of Interest Organization

There are a number of basic principles that have special validity in the organization of rural people.

1. The first principle regards organizable areas. We have referred to this in several other connections and need only make brief mention of it here. The chief consideration has to do with the territorial basis of rural society. All those dwelling in a given local farming area normally form the constituency of rural organizations. The fact of occupational homogeneity, usually coupled with a high degree of race, economic, and cultural similarity, normally allows of organization on this basis. There are, of course, exceptions. In

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*

the South the color line and social stratification make it impossible to unite all in the same organization. Division has to be respected. Apart, however, from regions where such problems exist, the geographic area is the social area.

The size of an area depends upon the number of people needed to constitute an efficient organization, to furnish a sufficient "volume of business," or to give an adequate unit for the best administration of a given function or service. The area must not be too large and inclusive of so many people as to exceed their capacity to coöperate and effect a unity of common-feeling in many common cultural ends.¹⁷ Few definite norms have thus far been established. Surveys of rural churches indicate that fifty families are about the minimum on which a congregation can survive. Consolidated schools need seventy-five to one hundred families. Other organizations have various requirements, according to their interests and cost of maintenance. The county is becoming increasingly important as an area of organization for certain interests.

2. The family is generally recognized as the unit of most organizations in the country. This is due to the fact that it is a unity as regards the occupation and interests of its members. It may be said of country people that they act as households, not as individuals. In this there is a marked contrast with urban organization, which is based on individuals in almost total disregard of the family. However, it must be acknowledged that interest grouping is changing this pattern by loosening the family unity. Organization is tending to become "semi-familistic" as a result.

3. Another principle to be noted is that individuals behave as unities, and that the activities of organization must, therefore, regard this fact. This, however, does not require that all interests shall be served by the same agency. To be sure, such was once the way of organizations. But the mode of our age is to specialize functions and to delegate them to many agencies. Certainly, each interest can best be advanced by its own means. Individuals must therefore enter into many separate associations for the satisfaction of their several needs. Each association should then avoid encroaching

¹⁷ Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities*, New York, 1938, p. 380.

on the sphere of the other. As Professor Lindeman has put it: "The interest which the specialized program represents will be endangered whenever it is presumed that this interest naturally excludes other valid interests."¹⁸

In this connection it may be observed that groups concerned with the more serious interests, such as business, health, and education, generally include social and recreational features apparently as a sort of catalytic agent to sustain and further their ends.¹⁹

4. The conservation of leadership also is necessary in rural communities. At best the supply is always limited. The "saturation point" of organization is likely to be determined, not by community needs so much as by lack of available persons for leaders. It often happens in rural communities, that one or two persons must furnish the directive ability for all organized activities. As Professor F. S. Chapin has pointed out: "Leadership in the community is usually vested in an inner circle of personnel common to several active groups."²⁰ Hence its range of achievement is soon reached and exceeded.

There may be a tendency to leadership polarization, if there is enough directive talent. There will thus be more than one inner circle of personnel. Under such circumstances it is suggested that "polarization of leadership within the community as between groups tends to elaborate until some leaders' range of elasticity for participation in group activity is passed, when some one or more groups begin to disintegrate until an equilibrium of group activity is restored."²¹ So it appears that the number and capacity of available leaders govern the amount and efficiency of organization.

5. The most effective organizations are likely to be community grown, not outside importations. Nevertheless, the greater part of local community interest organization is due to promotional in-

¹⁸ E. C. Lindeman, "Some Sociological Implications of the Farm Bureau Movement." A paper read at the American Sociological Society meeting, Washington, D.C., Dec., 1923.

¹⁹ J. H. Kolb and A. F. Wileden, "Special Interest Groups in Rural Society," University of Wisconsin Agr. Exp. Station, *Research Bulletin No. 84*, Dec., 1927.

²⁰ F. S. Chapin, "Leadership and Group Activity," *Journal of Applied Sociology*, January-February, 1924, p. 145.

²¹ *Ibid.*

fluences from the outside. Spontaneous local effort rarely rises to meet needs; more often interest has to be awakened and the needs brought to consciousness by vitally interested individuals and agencies. If the needs for which organizations come to be set up are valid and abiding and not merely artificially and momentarily created, the organizations have a fair chance to succeed. The people constituting them do not have to formulate their programs, but they do have to carry them out and make them serve vital ends. If people sit back and expect social mechanisms to run automatically, they will of course find them going dead on their hands. It is not that organizations are spurious, but that the people have not made them their own. If people participate in them more from a sense of duty than from a feeling of community necessity, organizations will be more formal than useful.

These responses to organizations are both old and common. Too many excellent agencies make their appeal and are received with enthusiasm only to die of neglect. Not a few coöperative associations, for instance, have had a brief day and gone to pieces from this cause. During the World War and immediately following, several volunteer agencies of city origin sought to extend their activities into rural districts. Under war-time stress, they made headway. The Red Cross was a notable example. But, imposed from without, such agencies failed to take root. They did not grow out of rural mores; they were "put over" on the rural people, but not into their lives.

6. The principle of equality must be respected in rural organization. This is because the rural community is usually homogeneous, and people are conscious of likeness. They are united in sympathy before they are in utilitarian interests. Anything that disregards or offends the sympathetic sense hinders the forming of utilitarian bonds, and, conversely, anything that recognizes and fosters the sympathetic sense makes easier utilitarian relations. The democratic form of organization meets this requirement. By democratic we mean a system in which everybody has a voice and a vote; where all policies are openly arrived at thru discussion. The New England town meeting is the model organization of this type.

Altho most organization in the country inclines to the democratic, there are tendencies to resort to other methods on the part of some agencies. This is particularly true of organizations whose interests are mainly urban, with headquarters in the cities.

7. Paternalistic methods do not create favorable conditions for rural organization. The traditional independence of the farmer did not in the face of difficult problems safeguard him against governmental paternalism. He became the recipient of all sorts of services and regulations from state and federal agencies. The U.S.D.A. thru the agricultural colleges, experiment stations, and extension service has been for many years advising and assisting the farmer until he has developed the habit of looking to the government on all occasions. In the last decade the role of government in agriculture has been greatly magnified and become still more 'mandatory. The Farm Board, the A.A.A., the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, the Farm Credit Administration, and the Farm Security Administration represent steps in the process.

However necessary this development may have been, the fact that it has made the farmer consciously dependent is highly significant. It means a kind of social and moral pauperization at the hands of the state. The attitude developed under such tutelage is already abroad in rural America and bids fair to become increasingly evident thru the neglect of voluntary effort and community initiative. If government is to be the prime mover and organizer of the essential social activities, why shouldn't it take care of the non-essential as well? is likely to be the common reaction. If and when such a state of mind becomes general, there will be little effort to meet community needs by voluntary organization.

The attitude in question is being further built up by a kind of subtle propaganda. Government agents and field workers both consciously and unconsciously sponsor it. They view with jealous eyes the work of volunteer societies seeking to stimulate self-help. The government agent is not infrequently more interested in promoting his job than in contributing to the permanent well-being of the people among whom he is working. Under existing conditions, it is exceedingly difficult for the farm population to defend

itself against this paternalism. If it must grow while self reliance and the will to self-help diminish, the outcome points to a new pattern of organization and community life.

8. The full utilization of existing organizations before new ones are essayed is another principle to be regarded. By this means a much needed conservation of community resources is secured. At first thought this principle might seem to be at variance with the third one mentioned, but this is not necessarily so, since it does not ignore the advantages of diversified structure. It would seek only to forestall overorganization and social waste. Naturally, every new agency costs effort and money. Therefore, so long as old ones can meet new demands without sacrificing the gains of specialization, they should do so. Often a church, a school or a coöperative society must temporarily be a "Jack-of-all-trades" in community affairs. Activities can thus be nurtured until they can stand alone, if a separate organization becomes desirable. This method ought always to be followed with reference to a new organization in the rural community.

There is, of course, much inclination to think that a new need must always be met by some new agency. So an organization is launched that draws its strength from existing ones and adds to the community load. When this goes too far and organizations performing similar tasks are duplicated, conflict normally results. Instances of this have occurred where the Farm Bureau has found itself offering the same services as the Grange, the Equity Society, or a local coöperative.²²

When overorganization comes to this pass, the way out is to federate the agencies.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Are there any differences in the functions and programs of special interest and community organizations?
2. By what criteria are rural communities to be judged as under- or over-organized?
3. From which sources do rural communities tend most to become over-organized, from local interests or from outside interests promoting national organizations and movements?

4. What evidence is there in your locality of changing organization areas and to what are the changes attributable?

5. To what extent could some of the organizations of your community be advantageously dispensed with and their functions performed as well by others?

6. Do you know of any disorganized rural communities? If so, what are their characteristics?

7. Does the leadership of the various organizations of your community tend to rest with one or two individuals or families or is it more widely distributed? Which do you think is better, the highly concentrated or distributed leadership?

8. What is an unsocialized group or organization? Are there any such in your community?

9. How far have interest groups in your community sprung up spontaneously? What have caused their origin and growth?

10. In what ways is the life of your community affected now by the past history of organization in it?

THE RURAL FAMILY

Number, Type, Size and Distribution of Families

THE 1930 census enumerated 29,904,663 families in the United States. The urban population contained 17,372,524 and the rural 12,532,139.

The census makes no distinction between the biologic or legal family and the household or the group that is domiciled together. Obviously there is a difference but data are not available to enable us to compare the rural and the urban situation on this point. However, it is probable that a larger percentage of so-called farm families are really households than is the case with either village or city families. The reason for this is that the open-country affords no haven for the unattached individual except the domicile of some family. In a study of 2,925 rural domiciles in Genesee County, New York, Anderson revealed the following six major types of households: husband-wife; husband-wife-children; husband-wife-other persons; husband-wife-children-others; broken-family households; and households in which no marital relations exist. Of the farm households 68.5 per cent consisted of married couples and such couples with children. Of the rural non-farm households there were only 60.5 per cent of this type. Among the farm households 19.7 per cent were composed of husband, wife, children, relatives, and non-relatives; whereas among the non-farm households only 12.6 per cent were of this type. Married-couple households of all types in the farm group exceeded the non-farm households of this class by 16 per cent. The largest percentage of the farm individuals were in five-person households (18.3 per cent) and the largest percentage of non-farm individuals (16.4 per cent) were in two-person households.¹

¹ W. A. Anderson, "The Composition of Rural Households," Cornell University Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 713*, Feb., 1939.

Obviously there is no uniformity in the type of household in the country. Apparently, if this study chances to be typical of rural America, considerable difference exists between the farm and non-farm type.

Outside New England, the Middle Atlantic, and the East North Central states there are fewer families per 1,000 of the population in rural than in urban territory. This means that the rural family is generally larger than the urban. The medium size of urban and rural families for the several sections is shown in Table 58.

Table 58

MEDIAN SIZE OF URBAN, RURAL-FARM, AND RURAL-
NONFARM FAMILIES, BY GEOGRAPHIC SECTIONS
1930 CENSUS

Geographic Sections	Urban	Rural Farm	Rural Nonfarm
United States	3.26	4.02	3.28
New England	3.44	3.45	3.15
Middle Atlantic	3.42	3.71	3.38
East North Central	3.27	3.75	3.11
West North Central	3.14	3.91	3.02
South Atlantic	3.28	4.56	3.66
East South Central	3.22	4.15	3.52
West South Central	3.23	4.14	3.38
Mountain	3.13	3.86	3.23
Pacific	2.75	3.31	2.87

Marital Conditions

Every age group of females from 15 years up shows a larger per cent of married people in the rural than in the urban population. About 7 per cent more rural than urban females are married and about 0.6 per cent more of country than of city men. It will be observed from Table 59 that in four sections of the country a larger proportion of urban than of rural men are married. The striking differences are for the Northwest, the Mountain and Pacific regions. This is probably to be explained from the prevalence of mining, lumbering, and frontier conditions in their rural territory,

which draw larger numbers of single men than do the towns.

In the male age group 15-24 years among the native whites, more were married in urban than in rural communities. The groups 15-19 and 20-24 taken separately show larger percentages for the rural. The contradiction is explained when it is observed that the age group 15-19, among whom the proportion of married is small, are more numerous in rural than in urban districts. Hence, when this group is included with the 20-24 year group, the combination reduces the percentage more in the rural than in the urban communities.² On the basis of the 1930 census it is estimated that 82.9 per cent of farm females 20 to 44 years of age were married as compared with 82.8 per cent of the rural non-farm and 75.7 per cent of the urban females of that age group.³

The following table shows the percentages of married men and women in the various sections of the land.

Table 59

PERCENTAGE OF MARRIED MEN AND WOMEN 15 YEARS OF AGE
AND OVER FOR THE URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION,
BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS, 1930^a

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS	URBAN		RURAL			
	Male	Female	Male		Female	
			Farm	Non-Farm	Farm	Non-Farm
New England	58.6	54.3	54.3	60.5	63.7	60.2
Middle Atlantic	59.1	57.6	55.9	61.2	65.7	63.4
East North Central ...	61.6	61.4	57.2	61.6	68.0	64.7
West North Central ...	62.1	58.3	55.6	60.8	67.4	61.2
South Atlantic	61.7	56.7	58.0	62.3	61.4	63.4
East South Central	63.0	56.9	61.8	64.6	65.1	63.8
West South Central ..	62.6	59.9	60.5	63.4	67.5	65.9
Mountain	60.5	60.7	54.1	56.4	69.6	67.2
Pacific	58.8	59.7	52.8	55.1	70.1	68.7
United States	60.5	58.5	57.9	61.1	66.0	63.9

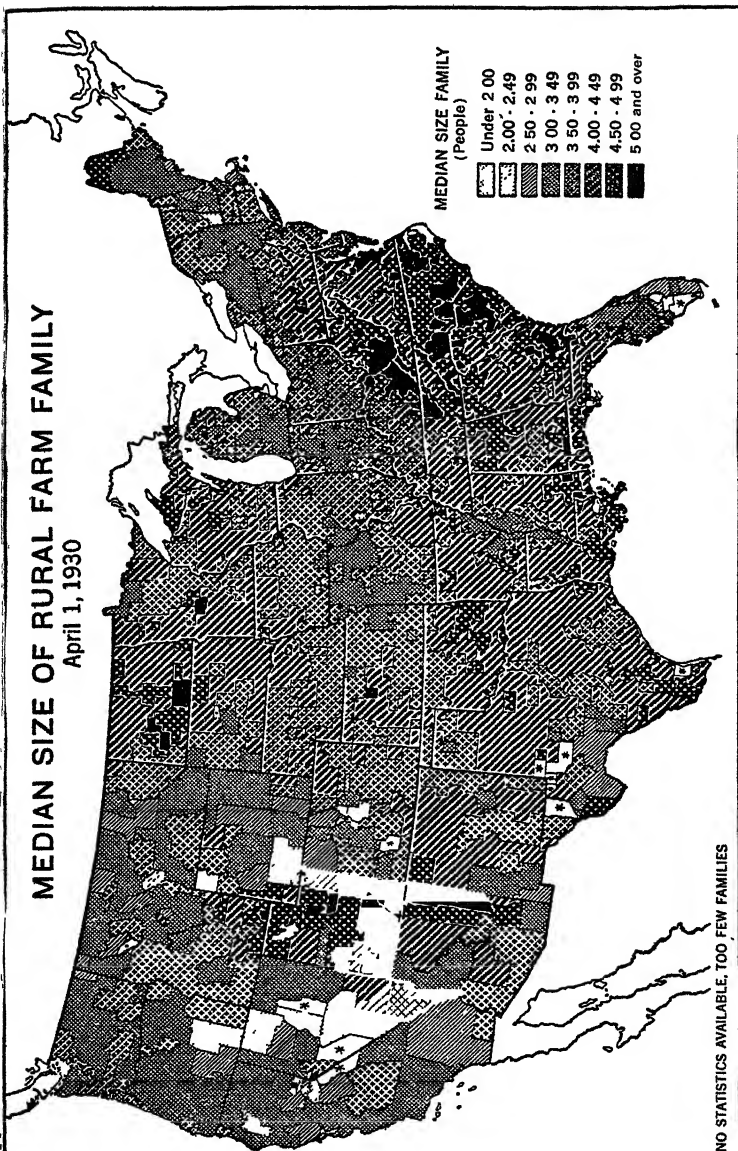
^a *Fifteenth Census*, Vol. II, *Population*, p. 948.

² *Fourteenth Census*, Vol. II, p. 385.

³ Frank Lorimer and Frederick Osborn, *Dynamics of Population*, The Macmillan Co., 1934, p. 367.

MEDIAN SIZE OF RURAL FARM FAMILY

April 1, 1930



*NO STATISTICS AVAILABLE, TOO FEW FAMILIES

70. Median Size of Rural Farm Family

Source: J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, "A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population," U.S.D.A. *Miscellaneous Publication No. 265*, Nov., 1937, p. 34. The largest farm families—more than half have over five persons—live in the Southern Appalachians and eastward across North Carolina and much of South Carolina. Such families are found also in a few counties of North Dakota and Utah, and one county each in Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Kansas, Idaho, and Arizona. Except for the counties in Kansas, North Dakota, and Minnesota these are all districts of small average productivity per farm and, except for the county in Arizona, contain many families that have strong religious beliefs. The smallest families are found in parts of

From this table it will be observed that the highest per cent of married females is found among the rural farm people of the Mountain and Pacific states. At the same time these regions show the lowest per cent of married men in the rural areas. The great disparity in the numbers of the sexes accounts for this. It will be noted further that the rural farm South more nearly approximates a balance in the marital state of the sexes than do the North and West. In other words, the situation in the South may be said to be fairly normal as regards the numbers of the sexes and their marital condition.

Of widowed the city shows a greater proportion than the farms, but not so great as the rural non-farm population. The following are the data for 1930: The percentage of males was 4.3 urban, 4.8 farm, and 5.3 rural non-farm. For females the figures ran 11.6 urban, 8.1 farm, and 11.8 rural non-farm. From this it appears that the rural villages have a greater number of both widowed men and women than either the cities or farms.

Divorce is only about half as frequent in the farm population as in the city or village population. In 1930 the Census revealed the following for males 15 years and over: Farms 0.7 per cent, rural non-farm 1.2, and urban 1.3. The percentage for females of the same age group ran 0.6 farm, 1.1 rural non-farm, and 1.6 urban. The greater stability of the farm family in comparison with the village or city family is thus apparent.

The rural non-farm population, altho lower than the urban in divorce, has twice as many divorced women as the farm in the ages 30 to 64. In other terms, the Fifteenth Census finds for the rural districts 1 divorced woman to 75 married, and 1 divorced man to 64 married, while for the urban districts it reports 1 divorced woman to 38 married and 1 divorced man to 47 married. For the farms alone, it reports 1 divorced to 103 married women and 1 divorced to 80 married men. In both city and country these ratios are considerably higher than they were in 1920. The trend is everywhere to more divorce.

The percentage of single persons of marriageable age, i. e., 15 years and over, is slightly greater for men in the country than in

the city; for women it runs 27.8 per cent for the city, 25.2 per cent for the rural farm, and 23.0 per cent for the rural non-farm. For men it is 32.1 per cent in the rural non-farm and 36.5 per cent in the rural farm as compared with 33.7 for the city.

Country people marry younger than do city folks. This is true for both sexes but especially for women. Census data furnish the proof. For 1930 in the age group 15-19, 10.2 per cent of the urban and 15.5 per cent of the rural females are married. Likewise in the group 20-24, the per cents are 47.1 urban and 58.8 rural. A New York report gives some facts which are presented in Table 60.⁴

The tendency of marriages in America as a whole has been toward an earlier age during the last generation.⁵ Thompson and Whelpton have demonstrated this holds true for both rural and

Table 60

PERCENTAGES OF BRIDES IN NEW YORK (OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK CITY) MARRYING AT GIVEN AGES IN URBAN^a AND RURAL COMMUNITIES 1921 TO 1924

Age of Marriage	Urban	Rural
15-19	21.5	27.3
20-24	39.0	37.0
25-29	19.8	17.3
30-34	8.3	6.6
35-39	4.8	4.1
40-44	2.8	2.5

^a Urban communities are certain cities listed in the Report, rural communities are all other places; the dividing line is at about 10,000 population.

urban communities.⁶ They suggest that it is taking place concomitantly with the rapid spread of contraceptive information.

Withal, the American people are among the most extensively married peoples of the earth,⁷ and those living on the soil are the

⁴ W. S. Thompson, "Rural Demography," *Publications American Sociological Society*, Vol. 19, p. 152.

⁵ E. A. Ross, *The Outlines of Sociology*, The Century Co., New York, 1923, pp. 15-16.

⁶ Thompson and Whelpton, *Population Trends in the United States*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1933, pp. 220, 226.

⁷ E. A. Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

most married of them all. The following explains why: "Who is more forlorn than the lone man or the lone woman on a farm? Since boarding houses are unsuited to the country, agriculture *commands* people to marry. Everywhere in the country districts married life begins earlier for both sexes, lasts longer before being broken by divorce or death, and if thus broken, is more likely to be succeeded by a new union than in the large cities. Family life prevails, therefore, in country rather than in city, and this is so because on the farm the family is a more natural and indispensable unit for life and work."⁸

Naturally enough, the marriage of farm people is mostly among themselves. W. A. Anderson, in a study of 2,337 farm families of Genesee County, New York, found about 80 per cent of farm wives were born in the country, 11 per cent in villages, and 9 per cent in urban areas. Considering both husbands and wives, 67.3 per cent of the farm owners, 65.3 per cent of the tenants, and 50.3 per cent of the farm laborers were farm born.⁹

The conclusions drawn by Professor Sanderson in his study of marital status as related to communities of various sizes afford a good general summary of the situation.¹⁰ The following statements are based on a standardized population of each size of community relative to sex, age, nationality and race.

1. The proportion of persons 15 years of age or over who are now or have once been married tends to decrease with the size of the community. Conversely, the proportion of single persons increases with the size of the community.

2. For white persons the age at marriage rises as the size of the community increases, except for males on farms and in cities of 25,000 to 50,000.

3. The proportion of families broken by divorce or widowhood rises as the size of the community increases.

4. The proportion of childless marriages of native white mothers

⁸ E. A. Ross, *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁹ W. A. Anderson, "Mobility of Rural Families, I: Genesee County, New York," Cornell University Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 607*, 1934, p. 2.

¹⁰ Dwight Sanderson, "Relation of Size of Community to Marital Status," Cornell University Agr. Exp. Station, *Memoir 200*, Feb., 1937, p. 36.

working for wages outside the home increases with the size of the community.

5. Family mobility increases with the size of the community.

6. The size of the family decreases with the size of the community.

These findings clearly indicate that the rural environment, especially the farm, is in almost every way far more favorable to the family than is the town or city environment. Under rural conditions it flourishes but in the urban community it tends to break down.

Place of the Family in Rural Society

Rural society in America has its center and circumference in the family to a degree not manifest in the city but common among rural dwellers in other lands. Originally the ancient village community, as we have seen, was a clan which had become permanently settled. Since it was with such groups that agriculture began, one may call the family the very cornerstone of rural society. Certainly it has always been its chief institution, giving status to the individual and determining the nature of much of the social structure. Like agricultural society in general, that of America, tho differing much from the old world type, still conforms to the peculiarly familistic pattern. In this respect it has not been unlike Chinese society. However, family in China means the clan, while it is only the household with us. There is among us no clannishness comparable to that of the Oriental world. Nevertheless, in contrast to that of the city, the rural family is very strongly inclined to clannishness.

The roots of this run deep into the past racial experiences of all men, but country conditions in every part of the world have nurtured a more vigorous family tree than have urban. On this point, a Chinese has said: "Localization is conducive to complete organization and so we find clans retain their solidarity as long as they remain in rural districts, but begin to disintegrate when subjected to urban influences."¹¹

¹¹ Ye-Yue Tsu, "The Spirit of Chinese Philanthropy," *Columbia University Studies in Economics, History and Public Law*, Vol. 50, 1912, p. 76.

Isolated highlands like those of Scotland and the southern Appalachian regions of our own country have been especially favorable to the growth of the clan spirit. Moreover, a homogeneous rural stock undisturbed by the incursion of new racial elements tends to the same end. So we find thruout the Southern States a strong sense of kinship and widespread clannishness. There is much pride of blood, resulting in the definite recognition of the larger kinship family everywhere.

In the North, where conditions have been different, owing to more migration and stock mixing, together with the absence of a definite ruling caste, the clan feeling has been far less manifest. However, it has not been absent, as the occurrences of many family reunions in the Middle West and Northwest indicate.

The Pattern of the Farm Family

In attempting to describe the farm family we shall deal with a generalized type and ignore the many variations from it to be found in the several sections of the country. The type we have in mind is the family dwelling on the family-sized farm either as owner or renter in the general farming areas especially of the East, North, and West of America. This type is assumed to be more nearly representative of farm families as a class than any other that might be chosen. It has certain distinctive characteristics acquired under the peculiar conditions that prevailed in American agriculture during the pioneer and "land-farming" periods of rural life. Its pattern is therefore in part a heritage of the past radically reshaped in the process of transmission and constantly modified by contemporary conditions. The qualities that give it uniqueness and differentiate it from the type found among agricultural villagers of the old world and especially from the American town and city types of family will be set forth in some detail.

In the first place, the farm family, like families in general, passes thru a life cycle during which its size and composition vary. The first phase is that of the young childless couple. The second is that of the parents bearing children. This is the period of high vitality

and growth, culminating with the largest number of unproductive persons in its career. At the third phase children begin to reach adolescence and are able to work. Then the family enters upon its strongest and most effective period.

In both the second and third states of its development there are likely to be additions to the family other than by birth. Relatives, normally the parents' father and mother or brothers and sisters, are often taken in and the household becomes a component instead of merely a genetic group. The custom of taking in relatives or even non-relatives, if not unique, has at least been more observed in the country than elsewhere. As C. P. Loomis has said, it makes the rural family a "‘protective society’ for the aged and also for helpless children. Instead of establishing old age and other insurance systems, the rural family itself may be considered as an insurance institution."¹²

The fourth phase is the breaking-up stage, reached when the parents have grown old and children, marrying, leave the parental home. Not infrequently, however, in the country a son is likely to marry and remain. Thus the household will add a daughter-in-law and grandchildren and a new cycle will be begun.

The American mode of dwelling in scattered farmsteads has made of the family an unusually strong, effective, and self-sufficient economic and social unit. Moreover, "The home life of the farm family is interwoven with the operation of the farm in a way that is not possible in any other line of business."¹³

While forces have been at work completely severing the ties of family and occupation in practically every other important vocation, they have largely passed by agriculture. Thus a more stable family has been preserved than would otherwise have been the case.

The full significance of this becomes apparent only when we recall that it is upon an occupational cornerstone that the family has always rested. Doubtless the fact that it became a social unit at all was due to the pursuit of economic interests. Therefore a common

¹² C. P. Loomis, "The Growth of the Farm Family in Relation to Its Activities," N. Carolina Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 298*, June, 1934, p. 57.

¹³ "Successful Farming," August, 1922, p. 3, quoted by William C. Smith in "The Rural Mind," *Am. Jour. Sociology*, March, 1927, p. 774.

occupation became indispensable to its solidarity. Thus it was when tribesmen hunted and fished for a living. Likewise when they had tamed animals and turned herdsmen. And so when they had tamed plants and had learned to cultivate the soil. And still again when they had evolved numerous arts of manufacturing and were engaged in making things. Indeed, thruout the whole course of social development down to the industrial revolution the economic process was a domestic one and the family was essentially rural. But the machine age rudely shattered the process and separated the family from its craft in practically every occupation save that of agriculture. This separation, involving removal from the rural environment also, has gone far to destroy the family itself, making it an exceedingly unstable institution. Altho the farm family has felt the general influences of the age and begun to respond to them, there remains the unifying and stabilizing factor of an occupation upon which its unity securely rests.

Moreover, to this factor may be attributed a certain integrity and nobility characterizing it in a degree not so commonly found under urban conditions. It has been able to perform its functions and satisfy the demands that society puts upon it better as a rule than the urban family. In so functioning, it has been more enduring than the city family. The latter ever tends to die out much more quickly. Celibacy, sterility, disruption, and other influences tend to destroy the urban family while the rural persists. Thus it has made the country the source of a refreshing stream of men and women supplying the city with life as well as with food.¹⁴

The conditions of its existence have fostered an unusual degree of interdependence among its members. In no other sphere of society do we find the sexes quite as indispensable for each other's well being. The spheres of labor allotted by custom to men and women can be interchanged less easily under agricultural conditions than under urban. There is rare mutuality of interests. Moreover, the members of the farm family, isolated as it is, must find sources of sympathy, discipline, pleasure, companionship, counsel, hope, aspiration and happiness largely in one another. It has been so-

¹⁴ T. N. Carver, *Principles of Rural Economics*, p. 21.

cially self-contained. As a Minnesota woman has put it: "Instead of seeing my son rushing off with the fellows, my daughter going off for a good time that I'll know nothing about, and the younger children coaxing to go to the movies, we'll be spending our evenings together with our music, books, or mutual friends or going to some amusement together."¹⁵ Social reactions are thus markedly centripetal. The chords of domesticity strongly bind. Family rules supreme in the lives of country people.

This interdependence, coupled with relative isolation, primary group traditions, property interests, and numerous children, tends to make the marital relation more stable and lasting in the country than it is in the city. The divorced woman finds it more difficult to support herself in the country than in the city. Moreover, family affairs are generally neighborhood affairs in the country. Group standards are more respected and enforced. No doubt also common property interests, which are far more general among farmers than among urban people, are conducive to marital stability.

This family, however, often tends to be patriarchal in type, i. e., it is under the father's domination. It is altogether natural that it should be so, for much in the farming situation fosters it. The management and direction of the enterprise, the necessity for someone to assume responsibility, the pressure for husbanding resources, and the lack of countervailing influences all operate to perpetuate and to establish the father's lordship. It is patriarchal for much the same reason that urban industry is autocratic. Only, in the country the autocracy involves the family as it does not in the city. One finds, for instance, the husband's parents and brothers living more often in the household than the wife's parents and brothers, due to the fact that a son more often inherits the home farm than a daughter.¹⁶ The father's authority extends over minor children, exacting obedience and work as a filial obligation. He commands the labor of his sons while they in turn receive from him training in the agricultural art. The farmer's son is thus apprenticed in a natural re-

¹⁵ *Do You Want Your Daughter to Marry a Farmer?* Pamphlet by the Farmer's Wife (St. Paul, 1922), p. 28.

¹⁶ C. E. Lively, "The Growth Cycle of the Farm Family," Ohio Agr. Exp. Station, *Mimeograph Bulletin No. 51*, Columbus, Ohio, Oct., 1932, p. 9.

lationship wholly unique and of the greatest educational value. Above all, the patriarchal relation prevails in a more intensified degree in the farm family on account of the greater isolation of the household in the country.

Howbeit, patriarchal authority in the country has generally been mild and wholesome, for it is modified by the necessity for coöperation and partnership in a common enterprise. Farm women have usually shared this partnership about as much as they have cared to. Says one: "Nowhere does a woman have a better chance to be her husband's partner in every sense of the word. The business itself is spread out in front of her door. Its details come into her kitchen. She sees the plans for the work going on about her. She hears the talk of the business at her table."¹⁷ If, therefore, the country has tended to be a man's world, it has been so naturally enough, but in spite of exceptionally favorable conditions for women to be partners.

Nowadays, however, the greater freedom, wider knowledge of the world, and the more abundant opportunities for self-support that are within reach of all undermine any extremely arbitrary lordship of the countryman over his family.

Altho the rural family inclines to the patriarchal type, it often manifests certain noteworthy democratic traits. One of these is a widespread custom for each member to participate in household discussions, plans, policies, and procedures that pertain to all individually and collectively. This custom tends not only to hold the family together and give it unusual solidarity but it also affords valuable training in the habits of democratic citizenship. The experience and observations of many who have been bred in the country lead them to assert that here is a force unmatched in other walks of life. Certainly, for the urban multitudes there is nothing comparable to it. Under this influence the country child grows up with a knowledge of affairs that the city bred child rarely gets and with a training by participation in matters of moment that is virtually denied the youth of the streets.

Undoubtedly, the farm family's practice of "talking shop" often

¹⁷ Emily Hoag Sawtelle, "The Advantages of Farm Life," Bureau of Economics, U.S.D.A., March, 1924.

indicates only a narrow experience and paucity of ideas. Moreover, it reflects and fosters a materialistic outlook. Nevertheless, the custom appears to be more good than bad, for it contributes to the continuing solidarity of the family and affords invaluable training for the junior members of the household.

Children have been counted economic assets in the country. The cost and burden of rearing them is ordinarily more than compensated for by the assistance they eventually give in work. There is therefore a sense in which the farmer has brought children into the world as part of the farm crop. It may not have been so consciously materialistic in many cases as this statement would imply, but nevertheless a real if undefined motive of this sort has not infrequently existed. In the past at least, if not so much now, the farmer who did not have boys coming on as prospective helpers was looked upon as economically unfortunate. In consequence, the birth control motive has not been strong among rural people. They have been exceedingly prolific. Changing conditions, however, are beginning to leave their impress. An altered economic status is rendering the rearing of large families less a matter of course. Evidence of birth control is appearing among countrymen as well as among city dwellers.

Hospitality has been counted a custom of the farm home. In the days of slavery the Southern planter prided himself upon the cordiality with which he could welcome the visitor. In the pioneer days of the Midwest the latch string always hung out. In both cases it was isolation that gave rise to hospitality and made it a tradition of the country. However, for a long time it has been little more than a sentimental memory. Altho by comparison with town or city the country everywhere is still hospitable, the edge of welcome is becoming thoroly dulled under modern conditions of communication.

The Strength and Weakness of the Farm Family

In describing the farm family, we have brought out its strong points. Its shortcomings and problems remain to be noticed.

1. The most important of these pertain to childhood and the proper appreciation and use of parental opportunity. Its handling

of the problem of sex is not altogether wise. The rural environment, both physical and social, conduces to precocious sex knowledge. It is readily acquired from contact with farm animals and from an unusual amount of conversation on sex topics heard among country people. Thus the age of adolescence is made rather difficult, for social relations are direct, unconventional, and singularly free among boys and girls. Where there is so much opportunity for isolation without chaperonage, sex vice may easily result. There is no evidence that it is widespread, but there are many communities where the amount of it is out of all proportion to the population.¹⁸

The situation, aided by a sentimental and ill-advised community attitude, leads also to early courtship and premature marriage. It is customary for country people to construe all comradeship between boys and girls as courtship. Admiration will be openly expressed and congratulations offered the couple who chance to be thrown together until what would otherwise be only good companionship is often converted into match making and premature marriage. The difficulty with such marriage is that it is likely to be determined chiefly by physical sex attraction rather than by mental and moral character traits. It "often represents," as Groves well observes, "the reaction from an uninteresting and empty environment and, however fortunate in itself, certainly does not demonstrate a socially wholesome situation."¹⁹

Even though the rural mores at this point are faulty and improvement can be suggested, changes cannot easily be made. More artificial restraints on sex interests would certainly seem to be called for. There is room for more social conventions designed to encourage wholesale companionship without premature courtship. Above all, the sentimental attitude of interference on the part of the community should be discouraged.

2. The rural family's range of contacts is too narrow. Its life turns too much upon itself and its own affairs; it is too solitary. This results in following standards of its own make—low or high, as

¹⁸ E. R. Groves, *The Rural Mind and Social Welfare*, p. 100.

¹⁹ E. R. Groves, *Rural Problems of Today*, p. 27.

the case may be—without adequate correctives from outside. The tone of the country home is therefore too often commonplace and mediocre, tho varying with the community. Unwholesome community relations grow out of this. The narrow, clannish spirit gives rise to keen rivalry, jealousy and vicious competition between families at many points in neighborhood affairs. Feuds have their basis in this. These often persist from generation to generation.²⁰

More than any other class of people, farmers find their social contacts among their own kinfolk, who often dwell in the same or in adjacent neighborhoods. There is much visiting within the circle. This has its merits in that the larger kinship family affords farm folk ready-made associational facilities that the city rarely offers. It is a partial offset for physical isolation, but at the same time too much association of like with like has a most narrowing influence. The wider field of contacts facilitated by the increasing mobility of the family is probably acting as a corrective to this narrowness.

Still, with all the modern means of communication and labor-saving devices, the average country woman suffers from the lack of many contacts and opportunities for association outside the family. Much more than the man, she is confined to the home without even contacts with backdoor neighbors such as her village and city sisters enjoy. Even if she drives an automobile, domestic duties restrict her range of movement. This situation is a source of frequent discontent with farm life among country women, breeding unhappiness and strain in the domestic circle, and beneath the surface probably playing a larger role in the rural exodus than is often suspected. It may explain why the country girl has led the grand march cityward.

3. In the third place, the rural family lacks idealism. Materialism has been too much with it. The world of things and daily toil easily crowd out much that gives meaning to life. Farming is so much a mode of living that the family is consumed by the occupation and fails to rise above certain degrading influences that make for cultural barrenness. Attitudes of hardness that easily turn to

²⁰ E. R. Groves, *The Rural Mind and Social Welfare*, p. 94.

sordidness arise. In making a living people forget to make a life. This is well illustrated, for example, in a grudging disposition toward play, and in an unsympathetic attitude toward cultural activities.

Means that will relieve farm women from drudgery and make the farmer himself more the master of his economic destiny would tend to correct this. But there must also be injected into the situation new valuations and new attitudes. In fact, a broader philosophy of life is needed.

The Changing Family Pattern

In characterizing the farm family, some recognition was given to the fact that it is undergoing modification and change thru the elimination of extreme physical isolation by modern means of communication, thru the insinuation of urban standards, thru the flowing of the vast migratory stream between country and city, and thru a farm economy that is being radically readjusted. Old behavior patterns have thus been disturbed, but after all they have been altered only moderately. To an astonishing degree the family has successfully withstood the assault of these revolutionizing forces.

In a recent study Beers has called attention to modifications that are more or less general—a decrease in the number of children; a development of semi-familistic rather than a family basis for rural organization; a loosening up of paternalism and a democratization of relationships between husband and wife and between parents and children—which seem to grow apace with increasing efficiency and industrialization of agriculture. He acknowledges that proximity continues to preserve much of the old solidarity against the dissolving influences of urbanization.

He concludes that both the rate and direction of future change in the farm family pattern are just as likely to be determined by the larger economic and social factors influencing agriculture as by the forces of tradition.²¹

²¹ Howard W. Beers, "A Portrait of The Farm Family in Central New York State," *American Sociological Review*, Oct., 1937, pp. 591-600.

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Topics for Discussion

1. State the reasons why farm folks are more married than city folks.
2. State five reasons in explanation of the fact that divorce is only about half as frequent in the country as in the city.
3. Explain why the composition of the country household is likely to be different from that of the city household.
4. Make a list of the disadvantages of the farm family and set over

against them the present-day factors that are tending to remove or lessen them.

5. Should the mechanization of agriculture cause large-scale farming to be widely substituted for small-scale farming, how would the change affect the farm family?

6. What evidence do you see in any rural community with which you are familiar of a change in the traditional family behavior pattern?

7. Would the disadvantages of any "only" child be greater or less in a farm than a city family?

8. Does the city family have the same or a different life-cycle from the farm family?

9. Are the farm families of your community smaller than in the past generation or not?

PASSING ON THE RURAL TRADITION, OR EDUCATION

EDUCATION has always concerned itself primarily with passing on the social tradition to the rising generation. The behavior patterns of rural society in this respect concern us.

Transmitting the Agricultural Art

The techniques of the group's ways of getting a living have from earliest times been generally imparted to youth under an informal apprenticeship incidental to the association with adults engaged in pursuing these occupations. Of all great occupations today, agriculture remains the chief one in which the group art is transmitted in this way. By virtue of having been born in a farmer's family, the country boy is automatically apprenticed to a farmer. Without knowing that he is serving an apprenticeship or realizing that he is acquiring what is perhaps the most difficult, because the most embracing, art in the world, he receives a technical education as a matter of course. No scheme of formal training can equal this for efficiency, nor can successful farmers usually be made otherwise.

The home is the business; the business is a family affair; and the two united in one afford the great school for the rural child. It is a school which is in session seven days of the week and fifty-two weeks of the year. It is a happy combination of living, working, and learning. Perhaps it is due to this that farming is the most self-perpetuating of all occupations. Apparently it is far more frequently transmitted from father to son thru many generations and in the family line than are other occupations. Anderson found that it passed on twice as often as non-farm occupations.¹

¹ W. A. Anderson, "The Transmission of Farming as an Occupation," *Rural Sociology*, Dec., 1939, pp. 433-448.

Generally speaking, the techniques of urban occupations must be acquired by the city child thru painstaking efforts. He does not ordinarily grow up imperceptibly into them, as does the boy on the farm into his art. The one is a "handed-down" art, while the others are arts to be achieved.

Uniformity and universality of technique are seen in the country, but diversity and inequality in the city. In the former much the same training has been received by all. Hence farmers form a vast body of equally skilled men. The city has many techniques and the widest variation in the proficiency of men following them. In contrast to the country, the city has many without any specific technique, for the difficulties of vocational education in the city are hard to overcome. Such difficulties the child of the soil does not have to face.

The Farmer's Traditional Attitude Toward Schooling

This "handed-down" technique of the farms naturally gave rise to a certain indifference and, in extreme cases, opposition to school education among farmers. They learned by *direct* experience what they considered to be the most important things of life; hence knowledge acquired by the *indirect* method thru books appealed to them as being generally unnecessary for agriculturists. This traditional attitude has been more or less of a factor in the educational situation of the rural community.

Thruout most of our history agriculture has been the only occupational outlook for country youth, and in that period and in those sections where this was especially true, countrymen have been disposed to discount any considerable education save that afforded by the farm itself. They have been unable to see of what use "learning" could be for the farmer, since the man altogether ignorant of the world's general store of knowledge, could do quite as well*cultivating the soil as the most scholarly. Tho wholly illiterate, he could normally hold his own with the educated man in plowing corn or making hay. In other words, it was not obvious that the agricultural art was derived from books or particularly benefited by any knowledge of them. Such knowledge was

"ornamentation," not something especially "useful." Thus the theory that "education" was necessary for the making of good citizens was slow of acceptance among farmers. Until of late, subjects that were not obviously and immediately practical met with relatively little favor. As a result, thruout much of our history the rural school has been a poor medium for the transmission of the general culture.

The attitude and conditions described are partially responsible for a cultural poverty in many rural neighborhoods. Evelyn Dewey cites an instance. In substance she says: The life of country children is extremely vacuous, for they have neither books, conversation nor playfulness at home. And at school a few minutes of recitation from elementary text books is all they get. Because the farm mothers are tired out at the end of the day from overwork, they do not tell their children stories nor read to them. In consequence, the child's world of Mother Goose, fairy tales, myths, and adventure is not opened to the country children as we assume it is to all children. In the whole Porter district but three families could be found where children had so much as heard of Mother Goose. At school a little lad remarked of a picture of cherubs, "Why, I did not know that children had wings." Good Friday meant only the day in which to plant potatoes. About the only positive constructive influence in the lives of these children, says this author, are the chores they have to do. But even this yields little, since "it is part of the hated endless farm grind" and does not appeal to children as their own.²

The attitude of the farm child toward schooling naturally reflects the adult's attitude. In consequence, the rural child is on the whole less favorably inclined toward school than is the city child. The latter normally has nothing else to do but go to school. Not so with the country child. For him the world is full of a multitude of things to do that are far more interesting than any school of which he is likely to have experience. So it is the habit of the country child to go to school when nothing else calls or interferes.

It can scarcely be said that farmers as a class are today indiffer-

² See Evelyn Dewey, *New Schools for Old*, pp. 139-140.

ent to the training of their children, for everything indicates a growing appreciation of the need for it, but many are still not sufficiently interested to provide the needed schools. To no small degree the school has been forced upon the rural community by compulsory laws that farmers did not sanction and often do not enforce. At least the country does not value schooling as does the city. There are, of course, plenty of exceptions to this general rule, for not a few rural communities everywhere are eager for good schools and exert themselves to the best of their ability to secure and maintain them.

Rural Illiteracy and Schooling

Illiteracy indicates the lack of schooling. The following table reveals the status of the rural and urban population in this regard.

Of the 4,283,753 illiterates of 10 years of age and over in the total population for 1930, the rural group, with less than half the population, furnished 2,483,149, or nearly three-fifths of all the illiterates. The rural population makes a poorer showing than the urban in practically every class and age group. It appears that the native white country child is four times as likely as the city child to be illiterate at maturity. In 1930 five out of every 100 farm youths were unable to read and write.

The extent of practical illiteracy is probably far greater in rural districts than the census data tend to indicate. The draftees in the Great War showed 25.3 per cent of illiteracy, i. e., of practical illiteracy which rendered them "unable to read and understand newspapers and write letters home." If the truth were known, it is likely that a far greater per cent of these hailed from the country districts than from towns and cities. A sample farm survey in North Carolina indicates that about one-fifth of the parents cannot read and write. This varied from 9.4 per cent of land-owners to 31.3 per cent of the landless among the whites and ran to 40.1 per cent of the Negroes.³

According to the Fifteenth Census the seven Southeastern States

³ C. C. Taylor and C. C. Zimmerman, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

Table 61

PERCENTAGE OF URBAN AND RURAL ILLITERATES FOR THE UNITED STATES, 1930^a

Age Period	All Classes			Native Whites of Native Parentage			Whites of Foreign-born or Mixed Parentage			Foreign-born Whites			Negroes		
	Ur- ban	Rural Farm	Rural Non- Farm	Ur- ban	Rural Farm	Rural Non- Farm	Ur- ban	Rural Farm	Rural Non- Farm	Urban	Rural Farm	Rural Non- Farm	Urban	Rural Farm	Rural Non- Farm
10 years and over ..	3.2	6.9	4.8	0.6	3.5	2.4	0.4	0.9	1.0	10.0	7.8	10.4	9.2	23.2	20.5
Male ...	2.9	7.4	5.1	0.7	4.1	2.6	0.4	1.1	1.2	8.0	6.7	9.6	9.1	25.6	21.8
Female ..	3.4	6.3	4.6	0.6	2.9	2.1	0.4	0.7	0.9	12.2	9.4	11.6	9.3	20.8	19.2
10 to 14 years	0.3	2.5	1.3	0.2	1.1	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.2	7.8	5.7
15 to 19 years	0.6	4.0	2.3	0.3	1.7	1.3	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.4	1.5	1.7	2.9	12.9	10.1
20 to 24 years	0.1	1.1	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
25 years and over ..	4.0	8.6	5.9	0.7	4.6	2.9	0.5	1.1	1.2	10.4	8.0	10.8	11.2	31.3	25.3

^a Fifteenth Census, Population, Vol. II, p. 1227.

showed the greatest rural illiteracy. For the rural population 10 years of age and over, it ranged from 7.8 per cent in Arkansas to 23.7 per cent in Louisiana. In five states of this group over 15 per cent of the rural adults were reported to be illiterate. Moreover, these and other distinctively rural states are perpetuating conditions of illiteracy, for a considerable percentage of children in the 10 to 20 age group were reported to be illiterate. In Alabama it was 6.9 per cent; Arkansas, 3.2 per cent; Georgia, 5.8 per cent; Louisiana, 8.0 per cent; Mississippi, 5.9 per cent; North Carolina, 4.8 per cent; and South Carolina, 9.7 per cent.

Curiously enough, most of these states had a larger percentage of their entire population enrolled in schools than the average for the United States. The explanation is not that they have more adequate school attendance, but rather that they have a far larger proportion of children than the average of the nation's rural population.

The degree of schooling is a better index than illiteracy. This is not known except as revealed by sample studies made in a few rural sections. In the state of Nebraska it was found that the average school grade attained by farm operators was 7.8 for men and 8.4 for their wives. There was very little difference among the various tenure groups. For the youth of 22 years and over the average grade attained by all classes was 10.2. From 15 years up a marked difference in favor of the children of owners as against all classes of tenants appears. This difference ranges from one to four or more grades. Of the sons and daughters, 20 years old or more, of all classes of operators, 8.6 per cent are university or college graduates.⁴

Conditions in this state are probably as good as can be found anywhere in America and certainly well above the average. In North Carolina quite contrasting conditions were found. A survey of farm operators disclosed the fact that the average grade attained by the fathers in the families was 3.69. For the owners it was 4.9 and for

⁴ J. O. Rankin, "The Nebraska Farm Family," University of Nebraska, *Bulletin* No. 185, Feb., 1923, pp. 25-27.

the landless men 2.55 grades. The white fathers averaged 4.55 grades and the Negro 1.49 grades.⁵

Recent studies of rural relief households in the Eastern Cotton Area indicate that the open country population of that section has had about a grade and a half less schooling than the average of the farm population of the United States. However, those still in school or just out are reported to be way ahead of the older generation. The 18-20 age group have gone two grades beyond the 45-64 age group.⁶ Thus the future farmers promise to be better educated than those of past generations:

The Reading of Farmers

In the matter of reading the habits of the farmer have differed from those of the city dweller in a rather marked way. Little use has been made of the printed page in the country. Reading has not been a rural custom. Agriculturists have felt no particular need for literature until of late. However, the ravages of insect pests and animal diseases, such as boll weevil, San Jose scale, hog cholera, bovine T.B., and other plant and animal diseases, together with the problems of marketing and many others, have caused an increasing number of farmers to resort to bulletins and books. Said one of Minnesota: "I used to be a fair-to-middling crop grower with a sideline of killing rattlesnakes and shooing away hawks. But now I am a mechanic, a chauffeur, and a business man besides. I used to plant my crops because they had always been planted that way, and now I read a book about it. . . . They used to say you can't teach the old dog new tricks, but the way I figure is the old dog has his choice of learning or starving. And there's no argument about learning being more fun than a husking bee."⁷

To modern city people reading has been almost as necessary as speech. The role of literature has therefore been more important

⁵ C. C. Taylor and C. C. Zimmerman, *ibid.*

⁶ T. J. Woofter, Jr., "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," W. P. A. Division of Social Research, *Monograph No. V*, 1936, p. 131.

⁷ Quoted by J. D. Williard in *Adult Education and the Library*, July, 1930.

and the reading habit more general in urban than in rural communities.

About the only index of the reading habits of farm people is the circulation of literature. On this only fragmentary data can be cited. However, they probably reflect general conditions. In a study of 1,500 Nebraska farm homes, representing a relatively high level of country life, there was found a country weekly or daily in almost every home, one or more farm papers in three-fourths of them, a woman's magazine in one out of four, a family magazine in one out of five, and a juvenile publication in less than one-third. About one in twenty borrowed books from public libraries—which were available to less than two-fifths of the people. The bulk of the reading was confined to newspapers and farm journals.⁸

In a study of 1,000 North Carolina farm homes representing a relatively low level of country life, there was found a country weekly or a daily paper in one out of five homes, a farm journal in about one out of four, a magazine in less than one out of five, and a children's paper is only 1.5 per cent. Less than 18 per cent of the white landlord families borrowed books. A third of the white and 47.1 per cent of the Negro families owned no books save Bibles.⁹ The contrast between classes in North Carolina is marked. In Nebraska there was no great difference in the reading materials found in the landowners' and tenants' homes, but in North Carolina five times as many owners' as tenants' homes had daily papers and three times as many had weekly papers. Farm papers were twice, church papers eight times, and children's papers four times as prevalent in owners' homes as in those of the landless. Two-thirds of the landless and three-fourths of the Negroes had no magazines whatsoever. A like disparity as regards books was revealed. The owners had four times as many books as the tenants and borrowed books three times as often. The Negro families had

⁸ J. O. Rankin, "Reading Matter in Nebraska Farm Homes," University of Nebraska Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 180*.

⁹ C. C. Taylor and C. C. Zimmerman, "Economic and Social Conditions of North Carolina Farmers," University of North Carolina, 1922.

less than half as many books as the white and borrowed them forty times less frequently.

A study of the reading of 758 young men and women 15 to 29 years of age in rural Tompkins County, New York, disclosed the fact that daily and weekly newspapers were available in 88 per cent of the homes.¹⁰ Magazines were received in 85 per cent of the homes of the young men and 89 per cent of the homes of the young women. The young men read 153 different magazines, the most popular ones being *The American Magazine*, *Collier's*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Liberty*, *Western Short Stories*, and *Popular Mechanics*. *The Country Gentleman*, *Farm Journal*, *Rural New Yorker*, and *Country Home* also had a number of readers among the farm youth.

The farm women read 101 different magazines, of which *Good Housekeeping*, *The American Magazine*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Collier's*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *McCall's Magazine*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Delineator* were the most common. *The Reader's Digest*, *Country Gentleman*, *Pictorial Review*, and *Country Home* also ranked high.

Books were read much less commonly than newspapers or magazines. Of the young men and women not attending school, 41 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively, did not read books. Of those in school 15 per cent of the young men and 11 per cent of the young women read no books.

Other surveys in Iowa,¹¹ Ohio, Kentucky, Texas, Tennessee¹² and West Virginia have revealed in general much the same conditions as those described.

All evidence indicates that farm journals occupy first place, county weeklies second, and daily papers third in the estimation and actual reading of farmers.¹³ For instance, the circulation of 42

¹⁰ W. A. Anderson, "Rural Youth; Activities, Interests, and Problems," Cornell University Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 661*, Jan., 1937, pp. 24-26.

¹¹ Iowa State College of Agr. Exp. Station, *Bulletin No. 217*, p. 466.

¹² *Yearbook United States Department of Agriculture*, 1923, pp. 579-580.

¹³ C. C. Taylor, *Proceedings of the Fifth National Country Life Conference*, p. 67.

farm publications in 1928 was heaviest in the great agricultural states and lowest in the urban and ranged from one to every 3 persons in Iowa and North Dakota to one for about 30 persons in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. The areas of highest circulation were the Northwest and Midwest.¹⁴

In addition to newspapers and farm journals, bulletins from the state colleges, experiment stations, and other public agencies reach farm homes. A rapid development of bulletin literature and rural agency publications is now taking place. The United States Department of Agriculture reported that in 1931 it circulated 32,000,000 copies of various publications. In addition, the state departments circulated a vast number. Such organizations as the Farm Bureau Federation, coöperative societies, and country life departments of religious bodies are issuing publications that reach a fairly large element.¹⁵

How much educational value the farmer's reading has, is difficult to estimate. Farm journals are evidently worthwhile agencies of instruction in farm practices. And so, for the most part, are the bulletins from the experiment stations. Publications of other agencies are informative on the business side of agriculture. The ubiquitous country weekly, however, is of questionable value. It is with rare exception little more than a purveyor of trivial gossip and political party dogma. Daily newspapers, of course, bring the wider world to the farmer's hearthstone. Books play so small a part that they are all but negligible. Magazines probably wield a somewhat more potent influence. A study of the thirty-five country newspapers of Connecticut by Professor M. M. Willey has given us reliable information as to their merits. His conclusions are that they fail woefully as newspapers of the communities in which they are issued. Their particular deficiencies are pointed out under three heads.¹⁶

(1) They are deficient in the amount of local news that they print. It is assumed that at least 75 per cent of the paper's reading

¹⁴ L. B. Wilson, *The Geography of Reading*, American Library Association and University of Chicago Press, 1938, pp. 233-236.

¹⁵ C. C. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

¹⁶ M. M. Willey, *The Country Newspaper*, p. 111, *passim*.

matter should deal with the local town and county news. But in Connecticut one-half of the weeklies fall below 50 per cent, and only five exceed 75 per cent. The range is from less than 4 per cent to nearly 92 per cent, indicating indifferent editing and failure to appreciate the real task of a local paper. Where there should be local news, space is filled with "boiler-plate" magazine material of inferior and questionable value. Thus the papers defeat their own true purpose. (2) They are deficient in the amount of socially significant news printed. Of the five news categories, political, economic, sporting, cultural, and editorial matter, that would most help the citizen understand his community and relate it to the outside world, only one contains a percentage of reading matter adequate to the needs of the readers. Political news tends to fall below 5 per cent of the total reading matter. Generally speaking, three-fourths of the papers devote less than 7.5 per cent of space to economic news, exclusive of advertising. Sporting news is even less prominent than political and economic. Thirty papers fall below 7.5 per cent in space devoted to this. Thus the papers neglect the play life of their communities. Opinion expressed in editorials fares a little better. Still, half of the papers devoted less than 4 per cent of their reading matter to editorials. The role of interpreting local problems in the light of world-wide events and of explaining the latter in their local bearings is evidently neglected. Cultural material, that is, matter dealing chiefly with school and church, is more adequate in amount than is any other type of news. More than half the papers carry above 7.5 per cent of such matter. However, the space given is in no wise commensurate with the importance of the religious and educational activities of the community. (3) They are deficient in that they show great variation in the consistency with which they print given kinds of news, and in the fact that this variation is high in some of the most important news categories. This means that the papers are erratic in the news they present. Four of the five socially significant types of news suffer from this variation.

Withal, Willey thinks that the claim of these papers to the title "local" is often questionable. They frequently are more akin to

magazines. Altho not devoid of influence, "they are not achieving the place that they might attain as important factors in the community life. In them is an example of lost opportunity."¹⁷ Carl F. Reuss in a study of 20 Virginia rural weeklies confirms this judgment when he says that "the rural newspaper tends to be weak in the discharge of its function as a social agency."¹⁸

Rural Library Service

Rural people in general and the farmers in particular have but few facilities for borrowing books. Public libraries do not exist in the greater part of rural America. 39,673,273, or about 74 per cent of the 54,000,000 rural population, are without any public library service. In contrast, only about 8 per cent of the urban dwellers, or 5,500,000, do not have access to public libraries.¹⁹ Even these figures do not give a true picture, for in the thirteen Southern States the use of public libraries is in most cases denied to Negroes. In fact, in 1935 only 18.44 per cent of the 8,291,698 Negroes of the South resided in localities where they were allowed to use public libraries.²⁰ Thus, instead of nearly 40,000,000, it is more probable that more than 45,000,000 rural people have no available free public library services.

In general, the Northeastern, Far Western, and Midwestern States have the best facilities, while the Southeastern and Southwestern States have very few of any kind.²¹ Out of 3,065 rural counties there are only about 300 that have permanent county-wide library circulation, while until W.P.A. entered the field 1,135 counties had no public libraries at all.²² Moreover, the 26 per cent of the rural population to whom public library service is available cannot as a rule be said to have service equal in quality to that of towns and cities. Nearly one-third of the 6,000 public libraries of

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁸ Carl F. Reuss, "The Country Weekly," *Rural Sociology*, Sept., 1939, p. 335.

¹⁹ C. B. Joeckel, *Library Service*, Staff Study No. 11, The Advisory Committee on Education, Washington, 1938, pp. 13-14.

²⁰ L. R. Wilson, *The Geography of Reading*, American Library Association and University of Chicago Press, 1938, pp. 32-33.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²² Joeckel, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

the United States serve localities of 1,000 or less population and over one half serve areas of less than 2,000. Moreover, fifty per cent of the 6,000 have annual incomes of \$1,000 or less. The per capita expenditure in most rural states indicates either financial inability to provide for libraries or neglect or both. In seventeen of them, all save North Dakota being in the Southern region, the figures run all the way from 2 cents in Arkansas and Mississippi to 12 cents and 13 cents in Tennessee and Florida. In general, a low per capita circulation of books is inevitably correlated with these figures. It runs in a dozen of these states from 0.36 and 0.39 in Mississippi and Arkansas to 1.15 and 1.45 in Virginia and Texas.

Apart from some 140 independent county public libraries and about 160 more counties whose population is served by city libraries, or a total of some 300 rural counties scattered thruout 35 states, there are only local rural communities here and there, except in two states, that have adequate public libraries. Massachusetts and Delaware have 100 per cent library service.

This picture of the rural scene does not give quite all the details, for there are sometimes other sorts of library service available to people living in areas where no public institutions of this kind exist. Services are supplied from four sources: (1) city and village libraries rendering free services to non-residents, (2) the same rendering service on a fee basis, (3) state library agencies making loans to individuals, schools and clubs, and (4) school libraries making loans.²³

There are no data showing how extensive these services are in rural areas, but they cannot be very great. All states have State libraries, and in 46, extension agencies are provided, but most of them function poorly, if at all. Not more than 10 or 12 states have established a first class service.²⁴ Per capita appropriations for state libraries are low, ranging from 0.5 cents in Texas to 10.3 cents in Nevada, with a national average of 2.2 cents.²⁵

Since 1911 California has had a statewide library system on a county basis. Half the counties now have libraries established as county departments by vote of the supervisors and supported by a

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁵ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

tax not exceeding one mill on a dollar. County libraries are certified by a state board of library examiners.²⁶

School libraries are multiplying rapidly. According to reports for 1934-35, they totaled 27,800, most having fewer than 1,000 volumes.²⁷ How many were rural is not reported.

All in all, the rural situation has been pretty well summed up in the following: "The most nearly forgotten man appears to be the intelligent general reader in the small town or in the country."²⁸

With the coming of the depression, the rural field was therefore abundantly ready for the W.P.A. to push library projects. This it has done by erecting a number of new libraries in areas that had none, by aiding in the repair of many old ones, and by rendering various other kinds of assistance. It estimates that it has established 2,500 new libraries and 2,000 traveling libraries, making available 2,500,000 volumes to 2,000,000 people, half of whom live in the rural South. In Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas, the program embraces the whole state. In some cases the results have equaled those of well-established public libraries.²⁹

These W.P.A. projects are following a new pattern of organization and service on both the county and a regional basis under state supervision. Thus, Mississippi is divided into four regions in an effort to demonstrate how by setting up units of large size it may be possible to provide efficient library service in rural areas. It is an experimental project that may show the way to better things.

One of the most promising developments is the impetus the emergency projects and Federal Aid have given to state and local appropriations for library service. The state of Arkansas and several counties in South Carolina, Mississippi, Michigan, and Wisconsin have made such appropriations in response to proffers of Federal Aid.³⁰ If Federal Aid continues, it is possible that in a few years most of rural America will be provided with some kind of library service.

The great drawback in the states where the need is greatest is

²⁶ L. R. Wilson and E. A. Wight, *A County Library Service in the South*, U. of Chicago Press, 1935, pp. 189-191.

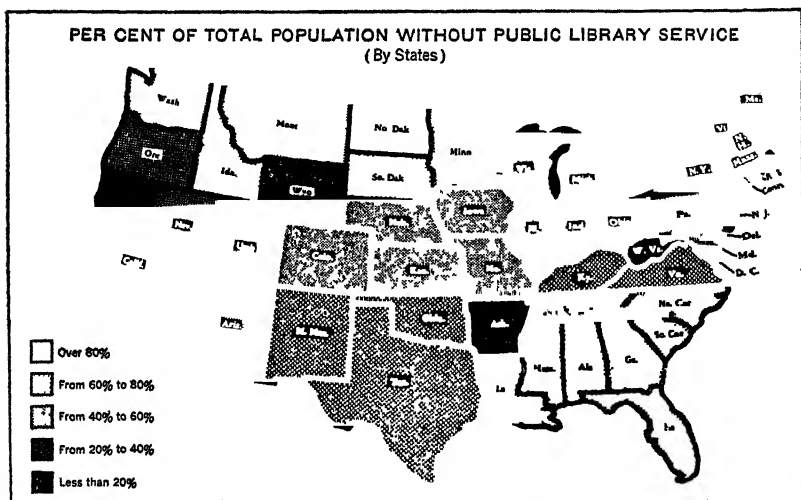
²⁷ Joeckel, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-59.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

the low taxpaying ability of the population. Since it costs a dollar a year per capita to maintain a good library service, many states, as, for instance, Mississippi and Alabama, with not over \$18 to \$20 per capita taxable wealth, cannot afford it. The only hope for such states is Federal Aid. The President's Advisory Committee on Education has requested Congress to appropriate two million dol-



71. Showing Percentage of Total Population without Public Library Service by States, 1935

Source: *The Equal Chance*, Chicago Library Association, 1936, p. 8.

lars for the first year, four millions for the year after, and six millions for each succeeding year for three years to be allocated to the States in proportion to the rural population to develop library service. So far Congress has not responded and probably will not. What the final effect of the W.P.A. achievements will be, remains for the future to reveal.

The Agricultural Extension Service

The greatest adult education enterprise in the world is the Agricultural Extension Service of the United States Department of

Agriculture. It is financed jointly by Federal, State, and County taxes and administered coöperatively by the Department of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges. In the 35 years since the movement began it has grown to be a major force in rural community education.

Its origin traces to the work of Dr. Seaman A. Knapp in an effort to counter the ravages of the cotton boll weevil in the Gulf States in 1904. The plan involved having individual farmers raise single acres of cotton under careful supervision. This demonstration method spoke more convincingly to neighboring cotton growers than any amount of verbal instruction. The method spread to other types of farming and to homemaking, and evolved into the Extension Service.

The Extension Service was firmly established on its present basis and financed by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. By 1922 a maximum sum of \$4,580,000 of federal money was at its disposal, provided the States appropriated an equal amount. The Capper-Ketcham Act of 1929 and 1930 further expanded its functions and support. By 1932 its budget had risen to nearly \$25,400,000. Since then general appropriations have been less, altho supplemental funds were given it by the triple A in order to implement that program.

Since its beginning the Service has changed emphasis. Three stages can be recognized in its development. For a long time its chief aim was to increase farm production. The depression caused it to put stress upon the economic and marketing side of agriculture. At present its efforts are expanding into wider cultural fields, having to do with recreation, art, music, drama, and general education.³¹

Its objectives have thus broadened as it has grown until one may describe them broadly as seeking to increase production and farm income, to better rural homes and the standard of living, to develop leadership among country people, to enrich the community life and broaden the outlook of dwellers on the soil, to make country boys and girls appreciate the rural environment, to pro-

³¹ Joeckel, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

mote better educational opportunities, and to impress the nation with the importance of agriculture.

The actual work under the Extension Service is done by county agents, home demonstration agents, leaders of boys' and girls' clubs, directors, and specialists in 25 or 26 different phases of agriculture, home life, social welfare, health, child training, community organization, and many other subjects. There was in 1938 a permanent staff of 9,142 persons besides more than 400,000 volunteers. In 1938 county agents were working in 3,075 counties and home demonstration agents in 1,706. Thus in 95 per cent or more of the counties of the United States some adult educational activities were being carried on by this agency. The number of demonstration projects undertaken annually is well over a million. Nearly that many meetings, attended by eight to nine million people, are held. The agents contact directly more than a sixth of the farm homes of the nation and influence fully half of them.

Included in this general program is work with juveniles as well as with adults. The boys' and girls' club work already described in Chapter XIX was started in 1908, and is now carried on in all the States. There are more than 200 club leaders. Well over a million and a quarter youth, aged 10-21, are enrolled today. Probably nine to ten million of country boys and girls have received training in the last twenty years.

Thru these channels a constant stream of scientific and practical knowledge on all manner of things pertaining to farming and country life is made to flow from the research sources in the Department of Agriculture, the Experiment Stations, and the Agricultural Colleges to rural people. Altho the greater part of this knowledge has concerned the techniques of agriculture and the methods of communicating it have tended to be stereotyped, the fact that the service has been able to expand into new fields and shift its emphasis to meet changing conditions reveals the great possibilities of this well functioning agency for the future.

Of late it has been the medium thru which the New Deal programs—the Agricultural Adjustment and Soil Conservation Acts

—have been interpreted and made effective. There can be little doubt about the fact that during the past generation extension teaching has been responsible for immense improvement in the agricultural art. In numerous ways it has helped farmers to become more efficient and scientific producers. At the same time its influence for general social and community betterment has not been negligible. Probably it is in this field that its greatest educational opportunity for the future lies, for problems of economic and social readjustment now overshadow all others. Evidence that the Extension Service is awakening to this fact appears in the action of a dozen or more Agricultural Colleges that have added rural sociologists to their extension staffs. Altho it can hardly be said that the improvement of farm production no longer merits attention, it needs to be realized that the primary problem of rural America has become one of reorganizing the social and economic system under which farmers live.

Rural Community Forums

The forum is an urban idea, involving the organization of groups of people under trained leadership for the purpose of discussing civic problems. As a form of adult education, it has proved so successful that the United States Office of Education with the aid of W.P.A. funds is extending it widely into rural as well as urban communities.³²

There are many difficulties in organizing and maintaining forums in sparsely settled areas which are not encountered in urban districts. In spite of them, reports indicate that a considerable number of such organizations are found among rural people. Farm organizations and the Extension Service have done something to foster the group discussion method on which the forum plan is based.

In providing forum facilities for rural areas sometimes the county and at other times two or more counties have been taken as

³² Katherine M. Cook, "Review of Conditions and Developments in Education in Rural and Other Sparsely Settled Areas," *Bulletin No. 2*, United States Office of Education, 1937, pp. 64-66.

a unit. The area served is called a forum district. In West Virginia three counties under the leadership of the county superintendent of Monongahela County constitute a district. Hamilton County, Tennessee, which includes the city of Chattanooga, forms another district under the direction of the county school superintendent. Another project under the city school superintendent of Colorado Springs, Colorado, reaches three counties. In North Carolina one project includes seven counties. Each week there will be from 20 to 24 forum meetings in different localities. Schoolhouses, Grange halls and other meeting places are used. Thus the rural population finds it possible to participate in local forums.

The forum movement seeks to make a competent and well trained leadership available to country folk. By organizing sizable districts leaders can be employed on a monthly basis to conduct regularly scheduled weekly meetings in the several parts of the area.³³

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³³ *Ibid.*

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Topics for Discussion

1. List the developments in agriculture during the last third of a century which have fostered reading among farmers.
2. Is meager schooling the primary cause of the low economic status of a large number of farmers or is their economic status the cause of poor schooling?
3. Does the Extensive Service program make up to those adults who receive its benefits the deficiencies of their school education? What, if anything, does it lack?
4. How adequate is the library service of your community and how can it be improved?
5. What need, if any, do you see for forums in the rural community?
6. Make a list of the changes in rural life that can be traced to the Agricultural Extension Service?
7. Extra-school education seems to be expanding more rapidly in rural society than the school itself. What explanation can you offer for this?
8. To what extent do the farmers of your community read the bulletins published by the U.S.D.A., experiment stations, etc., and listen to the radio programs put on for the information of farmers?

THE RURAL SCHOOL; ITS STATUS AND IMPROVEMENT

Purpose of Rural Education

THERE has been much disagreement among students of country life over the aims of rural education.¹ Opinion has revolved about two poles, one holding the school to be an agency for conserving country life, the other making it the agency for adjustment to general society. Champions of the first would give children "the education that is necessary to make a success of farming and enable them to find for themselves the interests and connections which are necessary for a contented and well-balanced life."² Proponents of the second believe education is to "provide the fullest socialized growth for the child and thru this growth to integrate society."³

Since many born and bred in the country are certain to migrate to the city, since the country itself is being urbanized and integrated with the wider world, and since vocational training is being provided by extra-school agencies, it would seem that the country school's aim should indeed be the fullest development of the child's personality in relation to the general culture.

Number and Type of Schools

According to the report of the Federal Bureau of Education for 1934 over 13,000,000 children, or just about half the nation's school population, were enrolled in rural schools. These schools,

¹ O. G. Brim, *Rural Education*, The Macmillan Co., 1923, Chapters 1-111.

² K. L. Butterfield, *The Farmer and the New Day*, The Macmillan Co., 1919,

p. 51.

³ Brim, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

numbering 213,484, constituted 88.4 per cent of all the public schools in the United States. About 65 per cent, or 138,542, were 1-room schools, attended by 29.6 per cent of the country children. Over 11 per cent, or 24,411, were 2-room schools attended by over 13 per cent of the country children. These schools to which 43 per cent of the nation's children go are maintained chiefly by the farm population, which gets about 9 per cent of the nation's income. Naturally the schools will be inferior to those the city, with the lion's share of the nation's income, can afford. A smaller per cent of rural than of urban pupils attend regularly. In 1935-36 it was 83.0 per cent for the rural and 86.1 per cent for the urban. Moreover, a smaller per cent of the rural than of the urban school population is enrolled, the figures being 82.5 as against 84.4 per cent. It is estimated that 800,000 rural children 7-13 years old were not in attendance.⁴

The data presented in the accompanying tables supply many of the salient facts about rural schools and show the changes that are taking place.

It is to be noted that the total number of rural schools is decreasing, due largely to the consolidation of 1-room schools. Altho consolidated schools numbered only 17,248, or only 8 per cent of all country schools, in 1934, their rate of increase is an encouraging sign that better education facilities are developing in rural areas. From 1926 to 1934 about 500 new ones were added each year, representing a 27 per cent increase in eight years. From 1916 to 1930 some 2,150 single room schools each year were closed or absorbed by consolidation. In some states, such as Delaware, Indiana, North Carolina, Louisiana, Maryland, Texas, Ohio, Georgia, West Virginia, and others, they are being consistently developed, altho the rate of abandoning single-room schools has been somewhat retarded since 1930.

Rural high schools are slightly more numerous than consolidated schools. In 1934 they numbered 17,627, having increased fully

⁴ David T. Blöse and Henry F. Alves, "Statistics of State School Systems, 1935-36," *Bulletin* 1937, No. 2, Office of Education, Washington.

100 per cent in the period 1926-34. It is significant that rural high school enrollment is now rapidly catching up with urban.

Most rural high schools are small; probably 75 per cent of them enroll less than 100 pupils. Two-thirds of the city high schools enroll over 350 pupils. It is estimated that for 1929-30 some 39 per cent of rural and 58 per cent of urban children 14 to 16 attended them.⁵

Since about 65 per cent of all country schools are of the single-room type, we need to ask just how they function. In the first place, a very large portion of them have an exceedingly small enrollment. Hundreds have but 5 or 6 pupils, and other hundreds have not over 10 or 15 pupils. In the second place, multitudes of them are not sufficiently large to give the full advantages of a typical primary group for either class room or playground purposes. The range of interstimulation is too narrow and the possibilities of organized play are too limited for the best results in the socialization of the child. Again, the number of grades in the one-room school where the enrollment is large makes possible only the poorest work. There is no opportunity for concentration on any grade or on any subject comparable to that which prevails in the grade schools of towns and cities.

The Little Red Schoolhouse and Its Equipment

The single-room country school building, once glorified as the home of the greatest institution of America, has long since ceased to merit or receive either praise or respect from educators. One has said that it is a "little house, on a little ground, with a little equipment, where a little teacher at a little salary, for a little while, teaches little children little things."⁶ But this characterization is very moderate compared with what may be truthfully said concerning a large per cent of them, for "Rural schools are, on the

⁵ Katherine M. Cook, "Review of Conditions and Developments in Education in Rural and Other Sparsely Settled Areas," being Chapter V of Vol. I of the *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States: 1934-36. Bulletin*, 1937, No. 2, p. 54.

⁶ T. J. Coats, Circular Letter, United States Bureau of Education.

Table 62

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES BY TYPES ^a

Types of Schools	1926	1930	1934	Increase or Decrease, 1926-1934
1	2	3	4	5
Total number of public rural schools ^b	230,863	221,051	213,484	- 7.5
Per cent of all schools	90.1	89.4	88.4	.....
1-room schools	161,531	148,711	138,542	- 14.2
Per cent of rural schools	70.0	67.3	64.9	.....
2-room schools ^c	20,135	23,290	24,411	+ 21.2
Per cent of rural schools	8.7	10.5	11.4	.....
Consolidated schools	13,584	15,616	17,248	+ 27.0
Per cent of rural schools	5.9	7.1	8.1	.....
Schools in rural centers offering high-school work	13,751	16,744	17,627	+ 28.2
Per cent of rural schools	6.0	7.6	8.3	.....

^a Katherine M. Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 4.^b Buildings, not organizations.^c Partially estimated.

average, less adequate for their use than prisons, asylums, almshouses, stables, dairy-barns, pig-pens, chicken-houses, and dog-kennels are for their use." ⁷

Extreme as this sounds, a panoramic view of almost any section of America would convince the most skeptical that it is no mere caricature. There are, of course, plenty of good buildings and not a few that are all one could wish; but not such the average. The utter inadequacy of the majority is the striking feature of rural school buildings. They are poorly situated, often without any grounds, or, with grounds that are grassless, treeless and beautyless. As structures they are poorly planned, poorly lighted, poorly heated, poorly seated, poorly equipped or virtually unequipped either for comfort or education, and poorly kept. Drinking water is not usually supplied. Sanitary arrangements and toilet facilities are as likely to be entirely lacking as to be provided in even a half-decent manner.

⁷ Thomas D. Woods, "The National Menace of Rural Bad Health," *Outlook*, Feb. 21, 1917, pp. 321-327.

Table 63

TRENDS IN NUMBER AND PER CENT OF CHILDREN ATTENDING
VARIOUS TYPES OF PUBLIC RURAL SCHOOLS^a

Types of Schools 1	1926 2	1930 3	1934 4	Increase or Decrease, 1926-30 5
Total enrollment of public rural schools	13,027,237	12,887,992	13,024,021	- 0.02
Per cent of total public-school enrollment	52.7	50.2	49.3	.....
Enrollment of rural public elementary schools	11,947,231	11,450,261	10,821,777	- 9.4
Per cent of total rural school enrollment	91.7	88.8	83.1	.....
Enrollment of rural public high schools ^b	1,080,006	1,437,731	2,202,244	+ 103.9
Per cent of total rural school enrollment	8.3	11.2	16.1	.....
Per cent of children 14-17 years of age attending high school: ^c				
Rural	29.7	39.5	60.5	.....
Urban	53.6	58.0	67.9	.....
Enrollment of 1-room schools ^c ..	3,553,682	3,483,062	3,202,476	- 9.9
Per cent of rural elementary enrollment	29.9	30.4	29.6	.....
Enrollment of 2-room schools ^c ..	1,213,670	1,319,265	1,432,671	+ 18.0
Per cent of rural elementary enrollment ^c	10.2	11.5	13.2	.....
Average length of school term in days:				
1-room schools	150	162	160	+ 6.7
2-room schools	151	156	161	+ 6.7
City schools	183	184	182	- .5

^a *Ibid.*, p. 7.^b Upper 4 grades.^c Partially estimated.

Rural Teachers

More than three-fourths of the rural teachers are girls and women. The most conspicuous fact concerning them is *immaturity*. Out of a total 358,554, a large majority range from 16 to 26 years of age, a third being under eighteen. Most of them are the daughters of farmers living in the counties in which they teach. A few are bred in the small towns and villages. They are, as a rule, of

the old native stock except where the newer American stock is dominant.

A second characteristic of rural teachers is *lack of training*. Many are very deficient in general education, not to mention professional training. However, standards are being raised and a definite improvement in the equipment of teachers is to be noted.

In 1918 it was estimated that 10 per cent of the rural elementary school teachers had themselves received only elementary school-

Table 64

SHOWING EDUCATION OF PUBLIC RURAL SCHOOL TEACHERS ^a

Types of Schools	1930	1935
Per cent of teachers with high school education or less:		
1-room schools	45.9	24.2
2-room schools	39.5	17.0
Per cent of teachers with 2 years of normal school education or more:		
1-room schools	23.3	42.1
2-room schools	36.4	60.1

^a Katherine M. Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

ing, and 50 per cent had failed to complete high school. The number who had received professional training was negligible. It will be noted in Table 64 that in 1935 over 42 per cent of the teachers in 1-room schools and upwards of two-thirds of those in 2-room schools had received the minimum of 2 years of higher education for teachers. Since these two classes comprise nearly two-fifths of all rural teachers, the progress they have made in qualifications in two decades is highly significant.

Altho there are very great differences in the educational requirements and attainments of teachers from state to state, the general trend is toward increasing academic and professional preparation, one object being to raise the standards of the small rural schools. If only comparatively well equipped teachers are given certificates,

the wholly untrained ones upon whom the little rural schools have depended will no longer be available; hence the country child will be assured of better instruction.

During the past decade 25 states have raised the requirements for the lowest grade of certificate. Three now require four full years of college and professional training. Six more require 3 years, and eighteen others at least two years. Thus 27 states require at least two years beyond high school for any type of certificate.⁸

Notwithstanding much improvement, the problem is still acute in a majority of the states. They have yet a long way to go to bring the quality of teaching in the village and open country schools up to the standards of urban communities. Generally speaking, the states with the largest rural populations have the poorest trained teachers. This is notably true of the South and peculiarly so of Negro schools.

Professor E. A. Cross has summed up the situation for teaching in general in contrast to other professions. His statement of twenty years ago still holds generally true of rural teachers. "The usual preparation," he said, "for law, medicine, architecture, and engineering is eight years above the eighth grade. The men and women who educate themselves for these professions expect to work for a lifetime in the profession for which they fit themselves. The public does not trust its health, its disputes, its buildings, its engineering projects, to boys and girls of eighteen; but it does entrust to such untrained youths what is vastly more important: the training of the next generation of the citizens of the republic."⁹

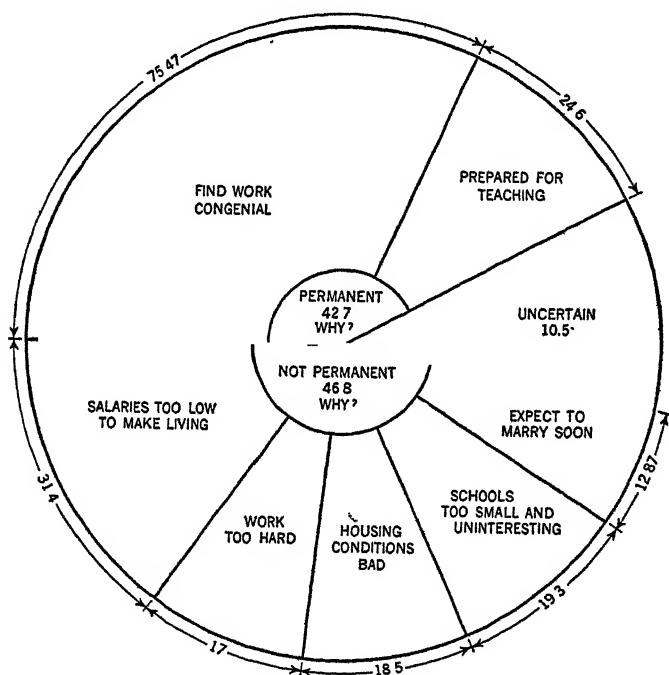
A third characteristic of rural teachers is *transiency* in the calling. School teaching in America is generally described as an avocation, not a vocation. For the majority of women it is not a profession at all, but only a pre-marriage occupation. Proof of this is found in the fact that half the teachers do not spend more than four or five years at it, and fully one-fourth not over one or two years. Among rural teachers transiency is much more pronounced than among urban. However, the depression has lengthened tenure and

⁸ Katherine M. Cook, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

⁹ E. A. Cross, "The Truth About Teachers," *The Yale Review*, July, 1920.

given increasing numbers a desire for permanency. Transiency applies also to the length of time served in one school. It is estimated that two-thirds do not remain more than one year in the same place.¹⁰

A fourth characteristic, following as a consequence of the third, is *inexperience*. Probably one-third of the teachers leave the calling



72. Reasons Assigned by 3,941 Rural Teachers as to Why They Have or Have Not Remained in the Profession

Source: *National School Service*, Feb. 15, 1919.

each year and are succeeded by raw recruits. The effect of this is to make bad conditions doubly bad.

A fifth fact concerning rural teachers is their *underpaid* status. This is perhaps a natural result of their being poorly equipped and

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2. See also *Teachers in Rural Communities*, National Education Association, 1939, p. 19.

transient. The salary scale in comparison with that of urban teachers is given in Table 65.

These data show the existing salary situation in country schools to be less favorable than it was in the middle twenties. The salary trend has been downward ever since 1930. In 1935 nearly half the teachers in rural 1-room schools and over a third of those in 2-room

Table 65

TEACHERS' SALARIES AND OTHER FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF PUBLIC
RURAL AND URBAN SCHOOLS ^a

	1926	1930	1934	Increase or Decrease, 1926-30
1	2	3	4	5
Median salaries of 1-room teachers ^b	\$761	\$788	\$517	- 32.1
Per cent paid less than \$500	14.1	9.7	47.1	.....
Median salaries of 2-room teachers ^b	\$754	\$829	\$620	- 17.8
Per cent paid less than \$500	25.9	18.4	34.2	.....
Average salaries in rural schools	\$855	\$979	\$787	- 8.0
Average salaries in city schools	\$1,785	\$1,944	\$1,735	- 2.8
Average current expense per pupil attending:				
Rural	\$62.72	\$72.01	\$53.31	- 15.0
Urban	\$100.31	\$100.95	\$92.68	- 7.6
Average capital outlay per pupil attending:				
Rural	\$12.29	\$11.94	\$2.74	- 77.7
Urban	\$29.51	\$22.75	\$2.55	- 91.4
Average value of school property per pupil enrolled:				
Rural	\$99.00	\$148.14	\$151.00	+ 52.5
Urban	\$299.00	\$336.36	\$347.00	+ 16.1

^a Katherine M. Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

^b Salary data are for 1925, 1930, and 1935.

schools received less than \$500. An annual salary of \$200 is reported to be not uncommon. In the small rural schools for Negroes more than a fourth of the teachers got less than \$200 in 1935.¹¹

The salaries of rural teachers are obviously on a level with the earnings of unskilled labor. The shame of it is that the salary to be had is so low that no incentive to become skilled is given those who aspire to teach. Hence low pay produces untrained, inex-

¹¹ Katherine M. Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

perienced, transient and inefficient teachers, whose qualifications in turn keep down the pay, in a vicious circle of cause and consequence.

The teacher is the heart of the school problem in rural America and the school problem is the heart of the educational problem for millions of country children. If the teachers of these millions are to be chiefly of low caliber, the educational handicap upon the rural child cannot be removed. He must continue to be deprived of a fair birthright to which the urban child is a natural heir.

School Term and Attendance

Nine months of school each year is the minimum standard approved by educators and child welfare agencies. For 1935-36 the average for the entire nation was a little over eight and one half months. For urban schools the average was 181.6 days and for rural 163.9 days, or substantially a month less. In eleven states, nine of which were Southern, the number of days was below the average. In Alabama and Mississippi it was nearly two months under the rural average for the nation. In the states with a low average there are many communities that have not over four or five months of school. The term is cut short from lack of funds and because of the demand for children in farm work.

School attendance is lower in the country than in the city, as we have already seen.

From short term and non-attendance there results widespread retardation in the country. Studies in West Virginia, where conditions are probably worse than in most states except those of the far South, revealed the fact that one-third of all the children were retarded. One-fifth were as much as three years behind grade. This retardation naturally increases with the age of pupils. Eleven per cent of those under 12 years and 43 per cent of those over 12 were found retarded as much as three years. Similar data from Colorado and Michigan indicate a retardation of 27 to 29 per cent among rural pupils in these states.¹²

¹² *Rural America*, Sept., 1925.

The Betterment of Rural Schools

The main deficiencies of rural education have been pointed out. How these may be remedied and the handicaps removed from country children, is one of the most vital problems concerning country life.

1. The betterment of the single-room schools seems to be the most promising point of attack. Inasmuch as from two-thirds to three-fifths of the single-room schools must remain such indefinitely, they must be made more useful and efficient. This calls for such buildings as will be comfortable, sanitary, and adequately equipped. It calls for playgrounds and their equipment also. It calls, further, for a school term of nine months. Above all, it requires capable teachers, able to lead community enterprises, and sufficiently paid to feel bound to the profession.

That much can be done with the little country school was demonstrated in the Porter School, near Kirksville, Missouri, which became the model for successful education under adverse conditions. Altho the teacher of the Porter School was an educational expert and the development quite phenomenal, there was little in the situation that is impossible of attainment by the average district.

The most important case of a state-wide effort to resuscitate the single-room district school seems to be that of Vermont. In that state poverty, sparse population, topographical conditions, and social stagnation had effectively combined to prevent rural school consolidation. At last, however, Vermont caught a modern note from the outside world, and saw new possibilities in her supposedly antiquated district schools. The State Board did all it could to improve them materially, to raise the salaries of teachers, and to get books and maps. The Vermont Branch of the American Association of University Women engaged in a steady campaign to arouse interest in local schools and to supply books. The State Federation of Women's Clubs provided scholarships to enable girls to get the best training possible on condition that they would teach a certain number of years in a one-room district school. A wealthy family instituted prizes for those rural schools which showed the greatest

improvement. "Schoolhouse bees" were revived, in which the whole neighborhood turned out to work on the schoolhouse. Old buildings and grounds were thus put into good shape. New books and modern equipment made their appearance. Thus in a variety of ways numerous agencies did their best to make the most of the little country school. Back of the movement was the idea that, if rightly managed, the little school has advantages for education that have been overlooked by the advocates of graded schools.¹³

The merits of the little country school are receiving attention. In the first place, the absence of grading is declared to be good rather than bad, for it permits each child to be taught in accordance with the degree of proficiency to which he has attained in arithmetic, reading, etc., without being standardized on a single grade level in all subjects. In the second place, it is contended that conditions in the district school develop a sense of self-responsibility which all the artifices of the perfectly equipped and organized graded school fail to give. The children must, for instance, split the kindling and build the fire to keep warm, and clean the stove-pipe if it smokes. These are common tasks thru which they learn responsibility for the common good. Thus in numerous ways the little school is a place where the child is forced into active citizenship as he is not in the "up-to-date" graded school. A third merit of the one-room country school is its play activities. On its playground all ages and types of children are mixed, as are people in the big world. Driven by the same forces that impel us all to some working compromise which makes life in society possible, the children learn to manage their affairs so that the rights and interests of one group do not seriously interfere with those of another. Withal, in the fourth place, the little school preserves the family relationship of older and younger in intimate association. The older ones have some responsibility for the younger, who are thus helped to mature. The younger ones learn more of the vital things of life, such as the rules of the game, from their older companions than from their carefully trained teachers. For this reason it is contended that for

¹³ Dorothy Canfield Fisher, "A Cinderella Among Schools," *The Survey*, June 1, 1926, Vol. 56, pp. 293-296.

younger children the ungraded school has advantages over the best graded school, not, admittedly, in the impartation of formal knowledge, but in the nurturing of personality.¹⁴

2. However, the consolidation of single-room schools wherever possible is generally looked upon as the best solution. It involves the merging of two or more small districts into one, the building of an adequate plant, and the public transportation of the children.

There is little agreement as to what the unit of school administration should be. It may be the New England town, the Midwestern township, the Southern county, or some other area. No one type will fit all situations, but changing social and economic conditions in rural America have made the common-school district antiquated and inefficient. Reorganization is needed, and the consolidation movement is experimenting in the field.

The merits of consolidation are many. In the *first* place, it brings together enough children to permit grading and the establishment of a high school. The group thus becomes large enough for organized play and for all those advantages that flow from a fairly wide range of contacts. The immediate benefits that accrue to the children by way of developing broad sympathies, toleration, group loyalties, leadership and coöperation will ripen into future gains for community life. The youth of today nurtured in the consolidated school group are the best guarantees of a wholesome community life in rural America for tomorrow.

In the *second* place, the consolidated school conduces to better teaching by better trained teachers, who are more attached to the community. It also conduces to better organization and supervision. There can be specialization in teaching along the line of agriculture, home economics, music, recreation, and manual training. Reasonable time and attention can be given to each subject and to recitations therein.

A *third* advantage of consolidation comes thru the plant. The little red schoolhouse can never meet such needs either for school or community as are met by the consolidated school. "School build-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

ings and grounds," someone has said, "designed to safeguard and promote the children's health, supply them with an abundance of mechanical means necessary for work and recreation, and develop in them an idea of the æsthetic. In this respect the consolidated school of the country has many natural advantages over the best of the city schools. More room for play space, gardens, and outside laboratories may be had for less expense. There is greater freedom from annoying noises, and much less danger from traffic. Consolidated schools furnish means of interesting the community in the betterment of its own life to keep pace with the ideals set before the children."¹⁵ The buildings usually provide auditoriums and supply the needs of a social center with playgrounds, parks and public demonstration plots.¹⁶ Thus, the plant, together with the type of school it houses, becomes an agency of better neighborhood life, adult education, and social progress.

A *fourth* gain from school consolidation is lengthened term and a more permanent teaching staff in the community. A good-sized enrollment furnishes more incentive for a long term than does a handful of pupils whose ranks are early decimated by the call of farm work. Moreover, in some communities the consolidated schools are finding all year employment for their teachers by utilizing their services in community activities such as boys' and girls' club work, home demonstration enterprises, etc. This, in conjunction with the movement to build teachers' homes as part of the school plant, at least in the West and South, is looking toward a settled and more permanent teaching force as part of the rural community life.

A *fifth* gain is seen in the increased enrollment, attendance and continuance in school thruout the grades and high school. In North Dakota the enrollment in consolidated schools is reported to be 15 per cent higher than in one-room schools. The daily attendance

¹⁵ *American Education Week Circular*, Dec. 3-9, 1922, U. S. Bureau of Education.

¹⁶ W. A. Hayes, "Community Value of the Consolidated School," *Tulane University Research, Bull. No. 2*, Feb., 1923, pp. 31-32; E. T. Stromberg, "The Influence of the Central Rural School on Community Organization," *Cornell University Agr. Exp. Station Bulletin No. 699*, June, 1938, pp. 10-16.

is a fifth better. In West Virginia it seems to be 40 to 50 per cent better. Continuance through the eighth grade and high school is often doubled and trebled.¹⁷ A single case will illustrate the gains in this line. In Randolph County, Indiana, where in eight years 96 one-room schools were put into 20 modern consolidated schools, and 15 high schools established where there had been just one before, the number of grade-school graduates entering high school jumped to 93 per cent whereas it had ranged from 20 to 50 per cent previously.

A *sixth* gain from consolidation is in community life and organization.¹⁸ The area of acquaintance of the people within the district is increased. The school acts as an integrating agency for a larger community. It has a pronounced influence on the interactions of farm and village people by bringing them closer together and effacing differences and the antagonism arising therefrom. Stromberg, speaking of the results of consolidation in New York State, says, "In every instance some observer in the village would advance the opinion that the 'country kid' is a thing of the past in the central-school district. He cannot be distinguished from his village friend on the playground, in the class-room, on the stage, or at the class dance. Occasionally the same evaluation would come from a farmer who had watched his boy take his place in the activities of the central school."¹⁹

The operation of a successful consolidated school thus tends to foster a vital community consciousness with all that implies for the area concerned.

School consolidation meets with opposition on a number of grounds. One is the increased taxation which it doubtless entails. However, when once consolidation is effected, the cost is said to be no greater than under the existing system. For instance, an Illinois survey found that in 1924-25 the daily current expenditure per grade pupil, including transportation expenditure, was 45.9 cents in 36 consolidated schools where cost of transportation was highest. In 330 out of the 745 single-teacher schools of 6 counties

¹⁷ See E. T. Stromberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

¹⁸ Stromberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-36.

¹⁹ Stromberg, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

in the same section of the state the cost per pupil was 46 cents and over.²⁰

Another objection to the consolidated school is that it is an "absentee institution," since it is situated at a distance from the neighborhood of the children who attend.²¹ This gives rise to a number of problems. Often children must be transported from 15 to 25 miles away from home, which necessitates that they leave before daylight and return after dark in winter. For elementary school children this is undesirable. Further, with the school so far removed from the homes of its patrons, there is little or no participation in its control or operation by the parents. They are out of contact with the teachers and the teachers know nothing of the home life of the children; hence the school institution plays little or no part in the life of neighborhoods in which many of the children dwell.²²

A third objection to consolidated schools is that they are usually located in urban or village centers, which means that they are almost invariably organized for the exclusive convenience of town children. Transported pupils are thus denied participation in after-school events, such as athletic contests, dramatics, and musical activities; hence they are deprived of much valuable training.²³

Moreover, such schools are said to alienate children from the country by preparing them for urban, not farm life. Pupils get the idea that success is something urban and not a rural possibility.²⁴

Thus the consolidated school where "absentee" in location and "absentee" in nature and purpose²⁵ is held to be far from a success sociologically. Its many advantages are said to be offset by its many disadvantages, some of which are inherent in the system, while others may be remedied.

The steady growth of consolidation seems to show that its merits outweigh its demerits. However, it is not "a panacea for all rural school ills; it cannot cure the evils of a sparse, scattering, low tax paying population. In such areas it must await closer settlement,

²⁰ *Rural America*, Nov., 1926, p. 6.

²¹ Marion B. Smith, "Rural Consolidated Schools and Absenteeism in Louisiana," *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, Oct., 1938, pp. 93-100.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

increased earning power, or a greater volume of both wealth and population." ²⁶

3. The third proposal for the betterment of rural schools goes to the bottom of the problem. It is to provide better teachers. Better teachers means trained, efficient, reasonably mature, experienced and permanent teachers, in contrast to the poorly educated, professionally untrained, green girls who in an unsympathetic, indifferent, mechanical way endeavor to run the country school. The kind of teacher needed has been well described by Professor Bagley, as "a mature man or woman, well grounded in fundamentals of elementary and secondary education, and with the additional equipment provided by two, three, or better four years of a broadly conceived, specialized education pointed directly toward this important job; fired with a love of country life, familiar with its problems; competent to the difficult task of making the rich environment that lies all about the school yield up its valuable lessons; competent as well to open to the country child the world that lies beyond his horizon; living in the community as a part of it; perhaps as its very soul and center; proud of his profession but humble with a sense of its responsibilities; ambitious not to attain 'promotion' in the current meaning of that term, but finely ambitious to grow in a work in which the possibilities of growth have no limit." ²⁷

To get such teachers in all rural schools is an ideal not easily attained. The first problem concerns the recruiting and training of men and women for the profession. The facilities for doing this are not adequate to the needs, or, at least, they do not meet them. In 1935 there were 184 state teachers' colleges and normal schools engaged in training elementary teachers. Of these 154 offered some work for the preparation of rural teachers. This work ranged thru professional, background, and subject-matter courses. Curricula of various duration were offered for rural teachers as follows: 15 schools 1-year; 58 schools 2-year; 4 schools 3-year; and 38 schools

²⁶ A. W. Haynes, "Community Value of the Consolidated School." *Tulane University Research Bull.* No. 2, Feb., 1923.

²⁷ W. C. Bagley, "National Responsibilities for the Improvement of Rural Education," *Proceedings Fifth Nat. Country Life Conference*, 1922, p. 43.

4-year. However, only a very few of these schools consider their primary function to be the training of rural teachers. Even when this is their function, stress is put on methods more than on subject-matter; hence the teachers may have little competency. Some nineteen do require of students in elementary school curricula preparation for rural teaching. New Hampshire, New York, and Oregon make it a state wide requirement, on the assumption that most graduates will begin teaching in rural schools. Obviously, this is only to meet an immediate need, not to solve the problem of rural education.²⁸

In addition to regular courses for rural teachers, informal opportunities are afforded for practical training in rural community problems and leadership on a number of teachers'-college campuses thru rural-life clubs. Such organizations are found in upwards of thirty institutions.²⁹

To supplement the work of the state teachers' colleges and normal schools the organization of high-school teachers' training classes and county normal schools arose at the end of the last century. By 1922-23 there were 1,743 such makeshift institutions in 24 states. They enrolled 32,000 students. By 1934-35 these training organizations had dropped to 615, and were confined to eight states.

Such are the facilities for training rural teachers. Extensive as they are, they do not seem to be turning out enough graduates to supply the rural schools, for it is estimated that one-fourth of the rural teachers leave the ranks annually.³⁰ In 1934-35 this meant some 65,000 new recruits had to be found for the one- and two-room country schools. Unfortunately, the best-trained men and women are mostly absorbed by the towns and villages, and the open-country schools take the leavings. However, with the high rate of turnover, it would not take many years to fill the country schools with professionally trained teachers, where such standards are required, sufficient training facilities provided and adequate salaries are in prospect. Altho higher standards are being set up,

²⁸ Marion B. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

the effects of a prolonged depression on rural schools have been generally disastrous.

In most communities plants and equipment have deteriorated, salaries have been cut, the term shortened, standards lowered, and education in general much curtailed for some 2,000,000 country children. Certain beneficial readjustments have no doubt been forced, but the outlook for educational progress is not promising. It depends upon an agricultural prosperity that is not in sight.

4. A fourth means of improving the rural schools is thru more extensive and better supervision of instruction. The states have assumed responsibility for this, but few of them have developed it extensively. The widest diversity prevails in the theory and practice of supervision.

A survey by the United States Office of Education reports 27 per cent of the counties as having supervisors in 1935-36. In Maryland and Wisconsin every county employed supervisors, but few other states come anywhere near approximating this.³¹

There is a tendency to extend this type of service beyond elementary and secondary instruction to wider fields, including welfare work. Thus art and music supervisors, health teachers, workers with the handicapped, directors of physical education, and visiting teachers are being employed in a few rural areas. The State of New York has what are known as traveling teachers whose function is to assist regular class-room instructors in the fields indicated. The teachers are not known as supervisors, but their work is of that nature. They are supervising over 1,000 single-teacher schools.

If the type of supervision described were made available to rural school children everywhere, it would meet a great need. Altho the prospect that it will become widely extended in country areas is not encouraging, it is significant that its emphasis is becoming creative. Instead of seeking standardized buildings, equipment, and courses, it is attempting to develop the rural child.³²

5. Compulsory Schooling. It is not enough that the rural school term be standardized at a minimum of nine months. Compulsory

³¹ Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 34-37.

attendance also must be added. Altho nearly all states have laws requiring this, outside of cities it is very hard to enforce them. In many states they are dead letter laws where school interferes with farm work for children, for local truant officers will not go against community sentiment.

Where children's work is of a relatively harmless nature, there is no good reason why the school term should not be adjusted to avoid interference as much as possible with the work season. A wise system would provide a standard school term distributed over such periods of the year as would largely avoid the work periods. Then with proper laws properly administered, compulsory attendance could be carried into effect without inflicting hardship or arousing opposition.

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Topics for Discussion

1. What education is rural?
2. Apart from the strictly educational function, what social services should the rural school render and how far does it render such services in your community?
3. Debate the question: Resolved that, owing to the financial inability of a considerable portion of rural America to provide adequate schools, the Federal Government should extend school aid.
4. Do the vocational agricultural courses of the rural high schools meet the needs or should they be broader? If they need broadening, to what extent?
5. Study some consolidated rural school and note the influences, advantageous or disadvantageous, that, in your opinion, it exerts upon the rural neighborhoods it serves. Defend your classification of what is advantageous and disadvantageous.
6. Do you think the future tendency of rural education is likely to be toward more or less similarity to the urban standards? Why?
7. Is there anything in which the single-room school excels the consolidated school?

RURAL RELIGION

Nature of Religion

RELIGION has to do with human values. It lays hold of the common values of life, intensifies, idealizes, universalizes, and seeks to conserve them. So the things, both personal and social, which men count most worth while become the objects of religion. But as circumstances change, so do these values. Hence, the objects of religion also tend to change, and there is thrust upon it the duty of laying hold of the new while holding fast to that which is good in the old.

The values that we cherish are social products. We have received most of them from the past. Even Christianity as a value conserving movement has been handed down to us. Having a common source of origin, it is obvious that the religion of urban and rural America is much the same. However, there are certain differences which are to be attributed to differences of environment and occupation in the two spheres.

Nature Elements in Our Religion

There is a sense in which our entire religion, urban and rural alike, might be described as distinctly rural in that it originated among agricultural people and has its background in country life. The imagery of its literature in both the Old and New Testaments is pastoral. Life's values are seen thru the husbandman's eyes as he sows and reaps, tends his flocks, and prunes his vineyards. Moreover, the Christian tradition carries along with it certain elements of nature worship. It received many of these to start with from Judaism, but has gathered new increments while coming down thru many ages and cultures to our day. The primitive religion of

every people has had to do with the physical environment and the phenomena of nature. Many of these older practices were swept up by Christianity and made a part of it.

Two or three instances will serve to make this clear. Our Thanksgiving festival is one. It is a day of worship in celebration of harvest. The custom is very ancient, going back to the time when primitive hunters performed ceremonies to cajole their nature gods into giving them abundant fish or game for food. And agriculturists likewise have very generally observed some social feast in commemoration of the harvest time. Easter is another holy day of similar origin. Originally it was a pagan celebration expressive of joy over the return of springtime. The renewal of plant life and the germination of seeds that gave rise to it led to appropriate religious rites. With these the idea of the resurrection of the dead became identified in the Roman world and so was handed down to us. These and other elements of nature worship associated with Christianity are, however, really not germane to it; they are adventitious elements, for Christianity is essentially an ethical religion. Wherefore we cannot say that there is anything peculiarly rural about our religion except the background of its sacred books and the accidental factors in it, together with the greater emphasis that such elements normally get when the religion is practiced under rural conditions.

Difference Between Urban and Rural Religion

1. Altho the characteristics distinguishing rural religion from urban are not numerous, they are of sufficient importance to be indicated. *First* of all, it is to be noted that the country is overwhelmingly Protestant, whereas the city is largely Catholic; only 3 out of 8 adults are non-Protestant. This is due, not primarily to any differentiating influence of environment, but to historical causes and the selective effects of occupations. It is a fact of history that the pioneering of America was a Protestant movement. The great stretches of the hinterland were naturally filled up by emigrants from the original Protestant colonies along the seaboard. When,

under the impulse of modern industry, cities commenced to rise, they drew large elements of their population from the Catholic countries of Europe. Hence, the cities have become predominantly Catholic. Altho the main difference is thus explained, the fact, for fact it is, that rural Protestantism is more Protestant than urban, is not accounted for. Perhaps country life is particularly congenial to the Protestant spirit. The independence, initiative and self-reliance of the farming people have found natural expression in the faith that emphasizes personal responsibility. A rampant individualism has afforded the most fertile soil for the growth of a religion of dissent. Consequently we see Protestantism undergoing its most extreme development in rural society. Freedom of belief has run riot and led to the multiplication of sects and schisms almost without limit. Sectarianism has always been most at home in the country.

Moreover, rural Protestantism has been predominantly of the evangelical type. It has stressed preaching and relied almost exclusively upon this method of recruiting. Creed, not cult, has been uppermost in its worship. Liturgy has not made strong appeal to a people whose conduct in every other respect has necessarily been unceremonious and informal.

2. A *second* characteristic of rural religion has been its Puritanic quality. The self-denial and rigorous discipline called for on the farm are thus reflected. Naturally enough the God of the countryman is a being relentless and exacting, even as the world of nature all about. Wherefore the religious life becomes austere, overburdened with a sense of duty, and largely devoid of pleasure. It is suffused with the harshness of the Old Testament rather than with the charity of the New. City people quickly shed any Puritanic attitudes of which they chance to be possessed; but not so those who dwell on the land. The most rural parts of the older sections of America today remain the most Puritanic. Thus in the Southern States one finds much the same attitude that characterized New England when it was preponderantly rural. Says Thompson:

The idea that the South is convivial and mercurial in temperament is erroneous. It would be more nearly correct to say that gravity, amounting

almost to austerity, is a distinguishing mark of Southerners. In any southern gathering, representing the people as a whole, there is little mirth. There is much more Puritanism in the South today than remains in New England. The Sabbath is no longer observed so strictly as twenty years ago, perhaps, but only recently has it been considered proper to receive visits on Sunday or to drive into the country. As for Sunday golf or tennis, the average community would stand horrorstruck at such a spectacle.¹

3. In the *third* place, it may be said that rural religion tends to be highly emotional. Indeed, rural people when aroused, are much more generally given to strong expressions of feeling than are city dwellers. Limited contacts and range of impressions have not built up such counter checks among the reactions to stimuli as make for balance and restraint. So the farmer's feelings, when once aroused, have tended to run away with him. To the few forces that have played upon him he has responded in extreme degree. Religion has been one of them. In fact, it has often been almost the only important cultural stimulus with which he has come in contact, hence its claims have been imperious and overwhelming.

This was notably true in earlier times in frontier settlements. In the midst of isolated and primitive conditions whole communities were swept by the blasts of frenzied revivalism into strange and weird emotional orgies. A typical case was the Cane Ridge meeting in Bourbon County, Kentucky, where a vast multitude of 20,000 or more people fell under the spell of wildest fanaticism. An eye witness, describing one such meeting, the like of which was common thruout Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Pennsylvania, said:

Many, very many fell . . . and continued for hours together in an apparently breathless and motionless state, sometimes for a few moments reviving and exhibiting symptoms of life by a deep groan or a piercing shriek or by a prayer for mercy fervently uttered. After lying there for hours, . . . they would rise, shouting deliverance.²

It is only fair to say that such behavior occurred in a time when religious fanaticism and superstition everywhere abounded, but for

¹ Holland Thompson, *The New South*, Vol. 42, The Chronicles of American Series, p. 217. By permission Yale University Press.

² F. M. Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, p. 74.

all that the urban places do not appear to have experienced such emotional outbursts. They were particularly rural phenomena. In that way the emotionally starved people of the country found expression. And so, thruout our history, have such outbursts continued to be essentially rural. The emotional revival has its stronghold in country districts today. It prevails extensively in the South and is more or less common in most other sections. It is a winter indulgence in the North and a midsummer affair in the South. Says Walter Burr:

"What sort of community activity do you have here through the winter?" I asked a farmer in a Kansas town. "Oh, there's plenty doing," he replied. Then he went on to tell me how the Baptists began their revival meetings early in the fall as soon as corn was out of the way, another church started immediately after the Baptists were through, and then two others finished the season up to March when spring work began, "And the Holy Rollers," he added, "keep theirs going all the time."³

Altho by no means all rural communities have been given to religious emotionalism, and none anywhere are so much subject to it as once they were, they are, nevertheless, pretty generally characterized by this sort of behavior,

The fruits of such religion are seen in a crop of queer movements and sects that have arisen and continue to spring forth in one form or another from the rural soil. Among them are to be counted Spiritualism, Millerism, Mormonism, Perfectionism, the Anti-Masonic Craze, and the "Holy Rollers." Doubtless there are forces at work toning down the religious intenseness of the country districts. As someone has said, "scientific agriculture is too intelligent to be romantic," and so the commercialization of agriculture takes out some of the awe and mystery that underlay the religious experience of an earlier day.

By-products of this emotionalism are unrighteousness and immorality. Thus Davenport, in describing conditions in western New York resulting from revivalism at an earlier time says:

"There are whole stretches of country in these parts that for

³ Walter Burr, "What's the Matter with the Rural Church," *The Unity Messenger*, December, 1924.

generations were known as the 'burnt district,' and which Finney found so blistered and withered by constant revival flames that no sprout, no blade of spiritual life could be caused to grow. Only the apples of Sodom flourished in the form of ignorance, intolerance, a boasted sinfulness, and a tendency to free-love and 'spiritual affinities.' " ⁴ A few years ago a church survey of Ohio discovered similar conditions in certain counties of the southeastern part of the state where revivals had been much in vogue. It was found that immorality of every sort flourished most where revivals had frequently stirred the people. In such communities vice, illegitimacy and vote-selling were conspicuous. ⁵

4. Ultra-conservatism may be put down as a *fourth* characteristic of rural religion. Traditional orthodoxy is tenaciously upheld by the rank and file of rural Christendom. Aberrant types have appeared and there has been deviation from conventional modes of religious expression, as we have already shown, but this has almost never meant theological, philosophical, or sociological radicalism or modernism. It has meant only variation within the limits of traditional theological orthodoxy.

Rural religion lacks the humanistic emphasis of urban religion. Supernaturalism and naturalism tend to concern the countryman more than human welfare. As a cultivator of the soil, he is more occupied with the problems of heaven and earth than he is with those of his fellows. Thus his religion is, traditionally at least, more cosmically than socially inclined.

Institutional Religion

The men who pioneered and settled America were concerned primarily with the other-worldly salvation of the individual. In keeping with this, the church was conceived to be an organization of saved individuals devoted to the saving of others. It was a fold for gathering and sheltering the lost sheep. That done, the task was thought completed. As a social institution it was therefore an end in itself. Practically, and at variance with its theoretical in-

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

⁵ Gill and Pinchot, *6000 Country Churches*.

tent, it did fulfill a purely social function in affording a community assembling place.

This was the type of church set up everywhere thruout the land. In village, town, and city alike, on the frontier 'mid the wooded wilderness, or on the prairie, its sole business has been to preach the hope of personal salvation. This "pioneer" church, as it is called, has been preëminently the church of the country districts. It was companion to the "little red schoolhouse." The farmer's individualism found free rein and great satisfaction in this church. It ministered fairly well to his needs. Sufficient unto the day of the self-sufficient farmer was such a religious institution. There was no rural social problem, and consequently no church problem then.

Until the close of the last century the pioneer church was pretty generally the center of community life. Its interests were paramount, even as they still are in thousands of communities, especially in the Southern States. Everywhere it was the custom to make the church the real "meeting house" rather than a mere sanctuary of worship. The practice of converting the occasion of worship into a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly neighborhood gathering for the purpose of greeting friends, transacting business, and arranging all sorts of engagements, was indicative of the fact that the church met certain social needs.

In keeping with its object, this pioneer church naturally stressed preaching in its formal and official program. That was what the farmer wanted in religion, and the church gave it. A weekly sermon or two, or, only one or two "preaching" services per month and an annual revival meeting, constituted the usual church's program. A poorly trained preacher, poorly paid and dependent for the greater part of his living upon some other occupation, dividing his time between two or more congregations and dwelling as a rule somewhere outside his parish, satisfied the demands of the religious farmer. Pastoral service was not rendered and parish activities did not often reach beyond the church door. The farmer built the house of God for "preaching"; and paid for "preaching"; he attended "preaching"; and when each "preaching" was over, closed the building and did not return again till the next "preaching time," a

week, two weeks, or a month later. Thus the church fulfilled its function in the halcyon days of country life.

Church and Social Change

But during these same days forces which were to bring about great changes in country conditions were at work. In a word, a veritable agrarian revolution was at hand.

The full results of this revolution have become evident in a greatly mechanized, mobilized, commercialized, and urbanized country life. As regards the people themselves, many of them have been seized with a great dissatisfaction and unrest. A chronic agricultural depression, the "movement of millions to and from the cities, the failure of the agricultural system economically as well as socially, the intervention of government to prevent general collapse, and the many readjustments and changes that have come to the rural community have altered the outlook of country people. A new day has dawned. It seems to be a day of greatly lessened opportunity and much uncertainty for the tiller of the soil, but be it what it may, the new day demands a new church even as it demands other new organizations.

The Church of the New Day

In the urban world the church has adapted itself to modern social conditions. In the words of Walter Rauschenbusch, it began long ago to "supply a working organization to create the Christian life in individuals and the Kingdom of God in human society." It stands more generally for social service and community progress than does the country church. Whatever will contribute to a more abundant life for all, tends to be its concern. It exists, not alone for the safeguarding of the elect, but, at least in some measure, for the saving of the community.

The country church must likewise become this sort of institution if it is to meet the needs of the new day. It must redirect its efforts and reconstruct its organization to community ends. It must do something more than hire annually an absentee preacher to retail

sermons and hold revivals, if religion is to survive as a vital force.

The needs to which the country church is called to minister are emphatically no longer altogether personal; they are also communal. When it was asked of the countryman of old, "What doth the Lord require of thee?" he could answer to the best of his knowledge, "Save my soul!" But today a broader vision compels him to give a different reply. His first answer will be, "To secure better farming, better business and better living for my neighbor and myself." And this, being translated concretely, means to provide good schools, good houses, sanitary surroundings, adequate opportunities for play, wholesome neighborhood relations, and every other facility for the enjoyment of health and the pursuit of happiness. And, having realized the first answer, his second will be, "Seek my personal salvation!" It is not that the second requirement is at all of secondary importance, but that personal righteousness is now understood to be tied up with social conditions. Economic prosperity, wholesome recreation, general education and intelligence, sound minds and bodies for all in the community, are needed in order that the individual may be morally whole and religiously sane. So the country church must devote itself to social service as well as worship. It must teach as well as preach, minister to the welfare of the community as well as to the redemption of individuals.

In fulfilling these functions of the new day, the country church must meet situations as it finds them and adapt its methods to them. Where it finds other social agencies at work trying to improve conditions, it has only to coöperate with them. Its mission is to furnish encouragement and inspiration, to rally the people to their support and promote organization. Under such conditions its primary task will be "to infuse the spirit and motive into the activities of all individuals and collective life rather than to embody the tangible expression of those activities."⁶ If such agencies are not at work in the particular community, then it behooves the church to take the lead and secure them. If their services are not available, then the church must somehow contrive to supply the needs on its own

⁶ K. L. Butterfield, *The Farmer and the New Day*, p. 177.

initiative, perhaps going so far as to "embody the tangible expression of those activities," i. e., set up the necessary machinery itself. Its duty is to champion every good work, yes, even to perform that work itself until such time as some other agency may be created to take it over and be responsible for it. When that is done, the church may give attention to other needs; and when all are being cared for, then there remains its peculiar function of ever keeping alive the ideal of the Kingdom of God in the hearts of the people.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Has the application of modern science to agriculture made the rural atmosphere more or less favorable to religion?
2. With government weather reports, forecasts and warnings which enable the growers of many crops to take precautionary measures and to exercise foresight has religion gained or lost in the country?
3. List and evaluate the present-day influences at work in rural America that are tending to reduce religious emotionalism.
4. Under what social conditions does religious revivalism prevail?
5. For which of the following purposes is religion most serviceable to farmers, to villagers, and to city dwellers: ethical stimulation, emotional expression, or social satisfaction?
6. Is there an adequate basis in the socio-cultural conditions of country life for a strong institutional religion?

THE RURAL CHURCH

General Facts

THE last available data on churches are from the 1926 census. At that time there were 167,864 rural churches, of which over 60 per cent were in the open country and the rest in villages. Their membership, 13 years of age and over, was estimated in 1930 to be 52 per cent of the rural population, in contrast to that of the urban churches, which claimed 58 per cent of the city population.¹

The average number of members per rural church was 115, and per urban 546. In cities of 25,000 or more there was one church to about a 1,000 population of 13 years or more; but in towns and open country, it was one to less than 240.²

Rural churches are the most numerous class of organizations in the country. They represent its oldest and most conservative organized community interests. Broadly viewed they have certain outstanding characteristics. In the most populous rural areas *over-churching* is conspicuous. Duplication and competition prevail where there is one church to from 300 to 500 of the population. Only in the sparsely settled regions of the West is the general ratio of churches to population relatively low. The primary causes of over-churching trace mainly to sectarian rivalry, the distribution of village and neighborhood units, and the racial and nationalistic composition of the population.

Duplication is responsible for rural churches having a small membership. According to a sample survey in 1936, open-country churches averaged only 93 persons of thirteen years and above, while village churches averaged 171. For the white Protestant

¹ C. L. Fry, *The U.S. Looks at Its Churches*, 1930, p. 15.

² *Ibid.*, *passim*.

churches, which are the dominant type, the figures were 86 and 163 respectively.³

In thousands of cases small membership has meant inability to carry on; hence there has been a *high rural church death rate*. The sample of 140 villages and 21 counties surveyed showed that 25.5 per cent of the village and 43.3 per cent of the open-country churches had less than 50 members in 1924. By 1936 these figures had been reduced to 20.1 per cent and 30.8 per cent respectively.⁴ It is churches of this size that go to the wall. Some of the chief factors in their demise are decline of rural population, growing rate of farm tenantry, and the migration of country people out of certain areas, as, for example, the Negroes from the South or Western farmers from the Dust Bowl.

The survey of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends found 1 in 8 country churches had died in the decade 1920-30.⁵ A restudy of the same areas showed 1 in 11 village churches and 21 per cent of the open-country churches had died between 1930 and 1936.⁶

While old churches die, new ones are being born. They are created by new population groupings, the rise of new sects, and, since 1930, by the reopening of abandoned churches by unemployed clergymen. In general, the birth rate is less than the death rate; hence the net decline in the number of rural churches continues.⁷

Another characteristic of the rural church is its *absentee ministry*, for a majority of village and open-country congregations do not have resident, full-time pastors. The studies indicate that two-thirds of the open-country churches are served by non-resident ministers.⁸ Many divide their time between several churches on a circuit. The average is about 3 churches. This practice has been called "ministerial vivisection."

Like country school teachers, rural clergymen have *short tenures*

³ E. de S. Brunner and Irving Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, Columbia University Press, 1937, p. 301.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

⁵ E. de S. Brunner and J. H. Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933, p. 211.

⁶ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁸ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

of service in their parishes. Among Protestants it will run between two and three years, but with Catholics the time is double.

Professionally untrained clergymen are in the majority. Only about one-third had been trained in colleges and theological seminaries in 1930. By 1936 this had risen to 43.9 per cent, indicating a trend toward a better equipped ministry, due probably to the keener competition brought by the depression.⁹

Poorly paid pastors are the rule thruout rural America. The salary scale is about on a par with that of rural teachers, but the latter, being largely unmarried, are in a better position.¹⁰ Because of low salaries probably a fourth of the country preachers even before the coming of the general depression were compelled to supplement their salaries by engaging in other occupations.¹¹

Finally, many rural churches are *aided by home mission funds*. Thus dying and unneeded country and village churches are kept alive. Interchurch coöperation on the community level has made considerable headway, but general efforts to eliminate unnecessary competition between denominational bodies has received support only among a few of the major Protestant sects. Most aid goes to villages, where the competition is keenest and where the ratio of churches to population also is the highest. In general such aid has declined sharply since 1930.¹²

All evidence seems to indicate that institutionalized religion in rural America is declining at an accelerated rate.¹³

The 1926 religious census reported 132,426 rural Sunday Schools enrolling some 10,063,786 attendants. According to the latest data gathered from sample village and open-country churches nine-tenths of all village and four-fifths of all open-country churches in 1936 maintained such schools.¹⁴ There are in addition many not connected with any church.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 317-318.

¹¹ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 237; Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 324-328.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

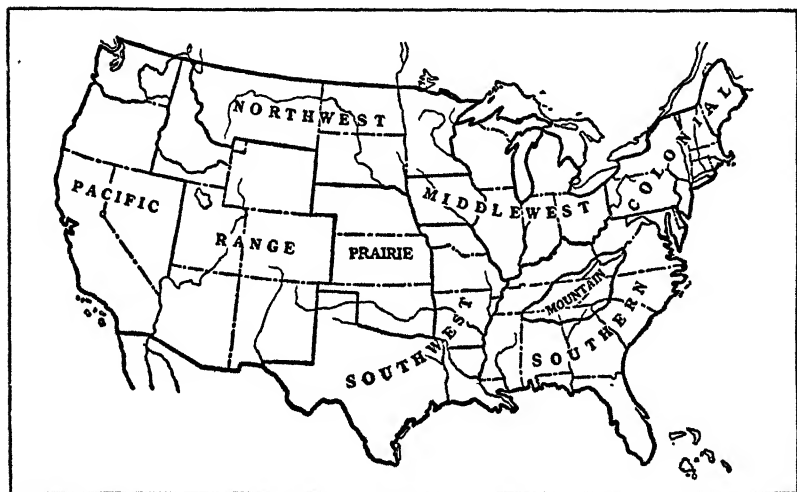
¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

A Regional View

Because widely different conditions prevail thruout the country, no general description of the rural church can do it justice. It must be looked at by geographical sections, which sample studies enable us to do.

Nine more or less distinct church regions have been indicated.¹⁵

1. *Colonial Region*. This includes New England and the Mid-



73. Rural Church Regions of the United States

Source: Courtesy of *Home Lands*, August, 1920.

dle Atlantic States. Most of this area is highly urbanized and industrial, with agriculture of very secondary importance. The rural population has suffered heavy drainage. What remains retains many of its Colonial characteristics. The church too retains the marks of its European origin and its status of earlier days. There is a permanency about its buildings, its pastorates and its traditions, even tho conditions of social change are all about.

Of leading denominations, New England averages but eight,

¹⁵ Dr. Warren H. Wilson first published this mapping in *Home Lands*, August, 1920.

which is less than any other region, and the Middle Atlantic States but 11.7, which is less than most regions. The Catholic Church is relatively the strongest, exceeding the Protestant bodies in membership. Denominational rivalry is keener than elsewhere except in the South and Middle West.

When one church to 1,000 people is taken for a norm, the Colonial area appears greatly overchurched. Indeed, next to the South and Prairie sections it is the most overchurched region. Nevertheless, here as elsewhere, underchurched communities are to be found. However, except for the Middle West, it has the lowest per cent of any area.

Parishes are smaller than in any section outside the Southern mountains. The superabundance of churches explains this. The average parish is about 12 square miles. More stagnant churches are found here than elsewhere. There are a good many abandoned churches. From 1924 to 1930 the net decrease of village and open-country churches was 19 per cent. The decline still continued in 1936.¹⁶ Very few new churches are being born in this region. In the Middle Atlantic States the country membership in village churches is on the increase. However, the proportion of the rural population belonging to village and country churches is on the decline. Church attendance grows less as competing social agencies offer richer programs that make a wider appeal.¹⁷ In the decade of the twenties about one-sixth received grants-in-aid from mission boards. Since 1930 this aid has increased. It has gone chiefly to sustain unneeded and competitive village churches.¹⁸

About 25 per cent of the churches have full time resident ministers. The region takes fourth rank in this respect. The clergy are the best trained of any region. The villages are well ministered unto, but the open country suffers neglect. It is among the highest regions in pastorless country congregations. Contrary to the situation almost everywhere else, the churches are successful in reaching tenants.

¹⁶ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

A considerable foreign immigration has gone onto the land, but the Protestant church feels little responsibility toward this group.

Of the whole white population in the town and country area during the decade of the twenties, 21.2 per cent were church members. Since then this percentage has fallen. The region ranks fourth in ratio of church membership to population.

Next to the Pacific and Middle West this region ranks highest in average number of Sunday Schools in proportion to churches. In the matter of young people's societies this region is perhaps the best provided of any.

The churches of this region fare well financially. This means the pastors are the best paid. If we except the South, this region shows generally more devotion to the church than is common elsewhere. Next to the Pacific coast it ranks highest in the land when measured by norms of adequacy.

2. *Middle Western Region.* This includes the North Central States and Iowa. It is the most fertile and uniformly prosperous section. Country life in general has attained its highest development here. Rural population is declining, and farm tenantry approaching the extremes found only in the South.

This region is the home of the village and little town. Hence, open country communities, unrelated as social units to towns or villages, are perhaps fewer than in any other section. Three-fourths of the town and country churches are in the villages. Those of the open country tend to die out, and the villages to draw away their members.¹⁹ In 1930 half of the village church-membership was drawn from the country. It grew 36.9 per cent from 1924 to 1930 and still continues, altho there is considerable indifference on the part of village churches toward the fate of those in the open-country.²⁰ The village drift of religious activities is common to all parts of the country, and is even more pronounced among Catholics than among Protestants.

¹⁹ B. Y. Landis, *Rural Church Life in the Middle West*, pp. 64, 65, 73.

²⁰ E. de S. Brunner and J. H. Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933, p. 209.

The region has more strong denominations than any other. The average for the six states is 17. About one-third of the church membership is Catholic.

The Middle West is not so overchurched as the Colonial, Southern, and Prairie, nor has it so much underchurched territory as the Range. Parishes will average double the size of the Colonial. They lack compactness and overlap a great deal. It is the region of largest rural churches.

From 1924 to 1930 the region lost 21 per cent of its churches. In the twenties 1,058 rural churches were reported as abandoned in Ohio alone.²¹ Since 1930 the churches have continued to lose ground in both the ratio of members to total population, and in attendance. Their proportionate membership fell 30 per cent in the period 1930-36.²² As elsewhere, other rural organizations and institutions are drawing people away from the churches. Probably less than 10 per cent of the rural churches receive subsidies from home mission societies. In this respect this section makes the best showing.

So relatively prosperous a region ought to have a large percentage of full time resident ministers, but under a fifth of the rural churches do have. Only two other sections show fewer, these being the South and the Southwest.

The region holds fourth place in the percentage of churches that are pastorless. Here, as elsewhere, the open country churches suffer most from the lack of pastoral care.

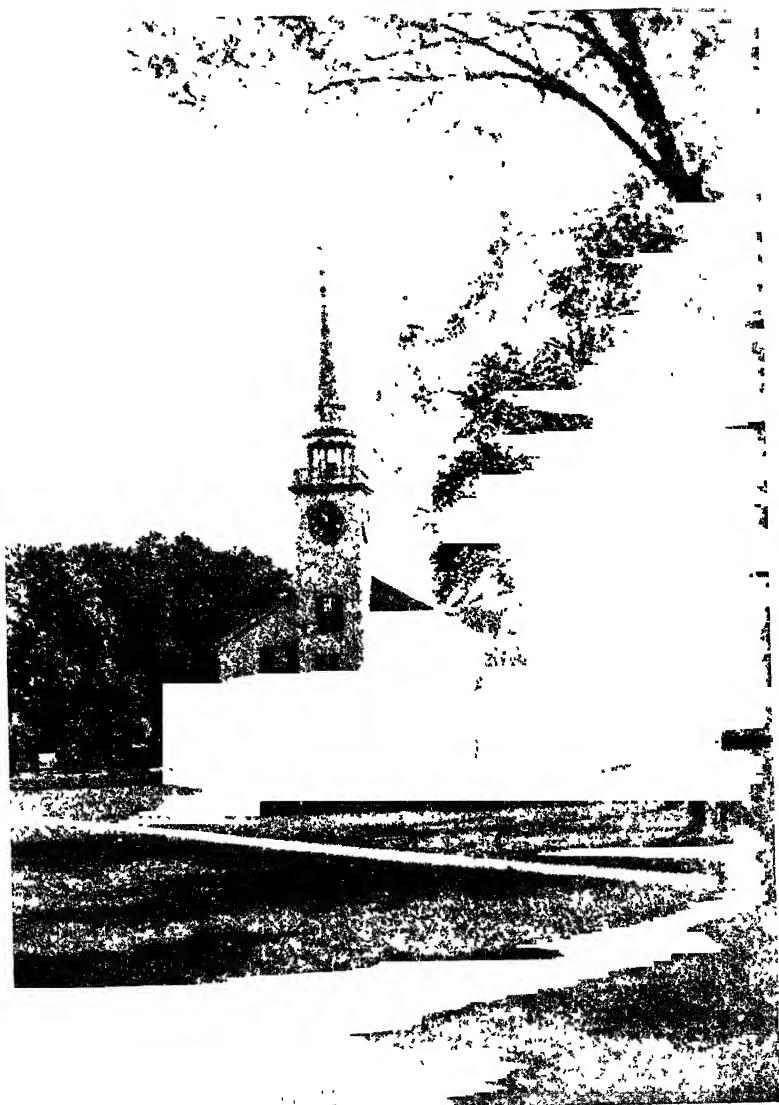
Altho more of the rural ministry of the Middle West live by its calling than elsewhere, it is not well-trained. Six other regions show a larger per cent of men with college and seminary preparation.

Here as nowhere else except in the Pacific region the Sunday School flourishes.

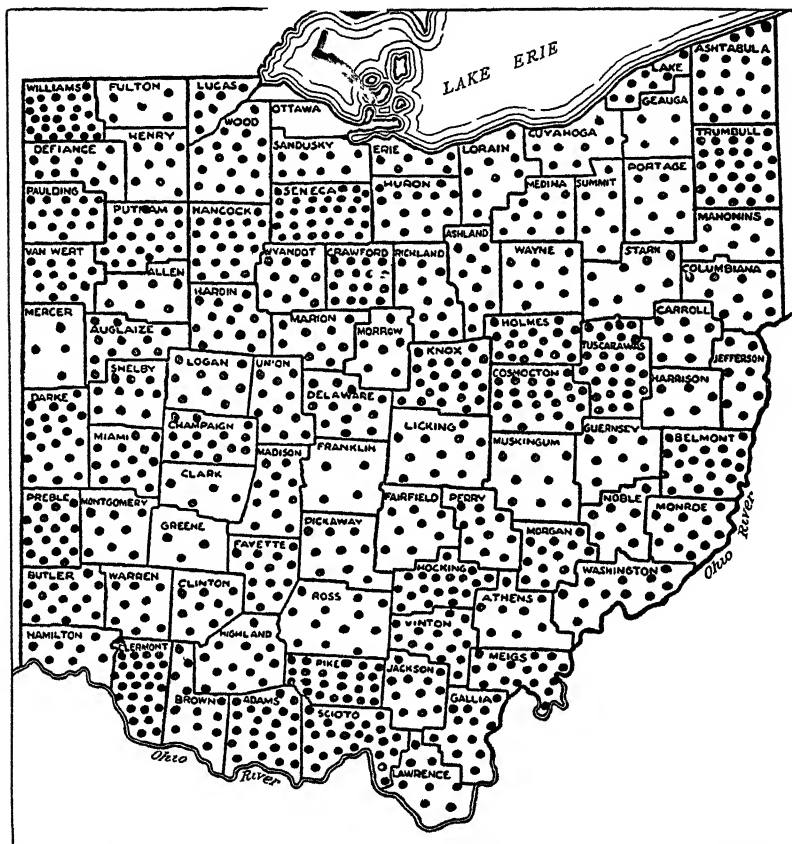
Churches are pretty well housed in this region. In country communities of the foreign born, the building, as in the Colonial Region, is large and often costly. The per capita financial support of the church strikes about an average for the whole country.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 221-222.

²² Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-304.



74. A New England Country Church

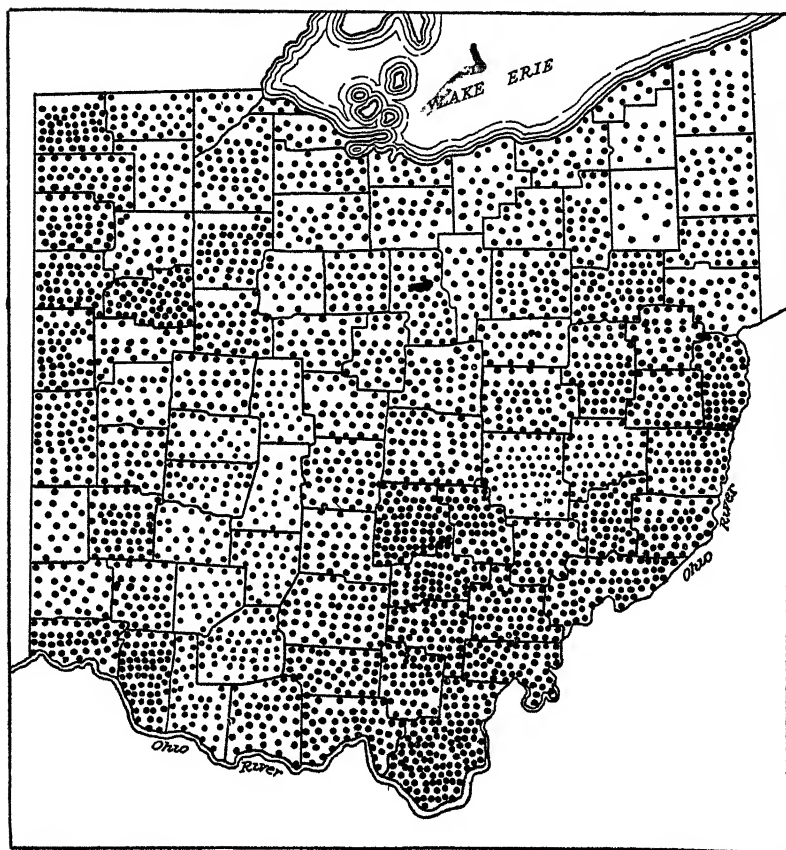


75. 1,058 Abandoned Rural Churches in Ohio, Distributed by Counties

Source: From C. E. Lively's "Some Rural Social Agencies in Ohio," *Ohio State University Agricultural Extension Bulletin*, Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 17.

Withal, when checked by approved standards of church efficiency, this region easily ranks third.

3. *The Southern Region.* This includes all territory south of the Mason and Dixon line and the Ohio River, east of the Mississippi, together with Louisiana, but excluding the Appalachian region. It is the most distinctly rural part of America, with three-fourths of the people living in the country. The communities are



76. 3,291 Rural Churches in Ohio with Non-Resident Pastors, Distributed by Counties

Source: *Ibid.*, p. 15.

of the open country type. A one-crop system tends to give way to diversification. Farm units are smaller than in the North and the per cent of tenantry greater than in any other section. The large Negro population constitutes the chief tenant class. The white population is almost exclusively old American stock. Economic inequality and social stratification are more evident than elsewhere.

With the exception of Maryland and Louisiana, the South is the

land of Protestantism. The average for the area is 12 leading denominations, the Baptists and Methodists dominating. No other section has such excessive overchurched and at the same time so many communities unchurched by Protestant bodies.

The churches of the rural South are its most important and vigorous community institutions, and not until the latter half of the twenties did they begin to lose heavily. The Methodists' and immersionists' churches with their Circuit-Systems had a high mortality. The Negro churches suffered from the migration of people to the urban centers of the South and North.²³ Thus in this region, as in all others, there was a net loss in the number of churches. It was equal to that of the Colonial area.²⁴

Since 1930 churches have improved their status. They have had a sharp gain in membership, and the ratio of church attendance to the total population also has gained.

This region shares with others the village-centering trend of rural interests, including church membership. Churches have a far larger inactive membership here than elsewhere. The emotional sects that have sprung up so freely in the Far West and Middle West have made the least headway in the South.²⁵

The churches suffer extremely from an absentee and itinerant ministry. Of the strictly open-country churches probably about 70 per cent are served by non-resident ministers. Despite this, and thanks to the wide prevalence of a circuit system, only one other region has so few churches without ministers. A very large majority of the churches have only once-a-month services.²⁶

The ministry is poorly equipped, poorly paid, and restless. However, surveys indicate that since 1930 there has been a decided increase of professionally trained preachers in this region. At the same time the pay has fallen to a low level, often to a no fixed salary.²⁷

The social and economic cleavage is often reflected in separate churches for farm-owners, tenants, and the professional and prosperous business class. In the textile-mill towns that are also agri-

²³ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-213.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

²⁶ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

cultural service centers, the leading denominations will often maintain separate churches for the villagers proper and the mill-hands.²⁸

On the whole, however, the white Protestant churches reach a larger per cent of the total town and country population than such churches reach in other regions.

Generally, among white and colored churches alike, social programs of any sort are prevented by theological bias and denominational jealousy.²⁹

The annual revival has been almost universal. It is a midsummer occurrence upon which the church depends for recruiting its membership. There are, however, indications that revivalism is on the decline.³⁰ When measured by generally accepted standards of social adequacy, the churches of this region stand at the bottom of the list for all America.

4. *The Southern Mountain Region.* It is a submarginal area embracing 250 counties of nine states. Agriculture is difficult, most of it being part-time and self-sufficient farming. Timber and mineral resources are extensively exploited. Isolation has been extreme; poverty, general; and living more primitive than in any other large area of the United States.

Outside the few industrial villages, where a few foreigners and some Negroes are found, the people are of old Anglo-Celtic stock. Because of their retarded civilization they have been called "our contemporaneous ancestors." They are extremely individualistic, with characteristics and customs of early frontiersmen.

The church is even more Protestant than in the rest of the South. Campbell says a majority are of some form of Baptist persuasion.³¹ Denominational loyalty is stronger and more controversial here than is common anywhere else.

Parishes are small, averaging only about 8 square miles.

There is the same absentee ministry and infrequency of service as in the South generally. In addition, the hiring of a new minister annually tends to be the practice. Far more of the clergy earn their

²⁸ Ibid., p. 322.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 314-315.

³⁰ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

³¹ J. C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland*.

living by some occupation outside their calling than anywhere else. In 1931 Miss Hooker found in a study of all denominations in 17 Highland counties that 80 per cent of the ministers were wholly without college or seminary training. In seven Highland states in 1926 two-thirds of the ministers in seven denominations were in the same class.⁸²

The church is entirely of the pioneer type, following the customs that once prevailed on the frontier of the West and North.

Missionary aid has been poured in from Northern sources, but not always to the benefit of the situation.

For some years the industrial invasion of the region has been slowly changing its economic and social life generally for the worse.

5. *The Northwest Region.* This embraces Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Eastern Montana. Agriculture dominates. Spring wheat is the chief crop. Farms are very large, except in Minnesota, and their number is growing. Tenantry, less prevalent than farther east, is on the increase. Social life is more or less in a pioneer stage.

The population is sparse and lacks cohesion. The stock is largely Scandinavian and German, with traditions of coöperation.

Antagonism between town and country has long been widespread and intense. However, the village-centering trend of rural interests is modifying it.

There is an average of 15 leading denominations in this region. A good third of the people are Catholic. The region stands fourth in the number of communities without Protestant churches.

The western semi-arid part of this region has suffered severely from drought and depression in recent years, causing a heavy exodus of population. Thus from a region of growing churches, it has become one of decline.

One outstanding characteristic of the region is the relatively small per cent of farm owners reached by the church. No parallel to this is found except in the Range and Pacific regions. As usual, the tenant class is not being reached.

The churches of this region except in the villages are compara-

⁸² Elizabeth R. Hooker, *Religion in the Highlands*, The Home Mission Council, 1933, p. 162.

tively well served by ministers. About one-fourth of them have full-time, resident pastors. Here the circuit system, or "ministerial vivisection," severely affects the town, village and open country clergy—almost as much as it does in the South. The data seem to indicate that fewer ministers here follow other occupations than generally elsewhere.

In other respects the churches of this region are similar to those in the Range region, in the West, or in the Middle West.

6. *The Prairie Region.* This includes Kansas, Nebraska, and part of Oklahoma. A considerable portion of this region lies in the Dust Bowl—an area rendered almost uninhabitable in 1936 by prolonged drought and wind erosion. It is a country of large, highly mechanized wheat ranches, with much tenantry and considerable seasonal labor. Towns are not numerous. The population is fairly homogeneous, with some admixture of foreign strains, but its culture is rather primitive. Before the unwise utilization of the land and adverse climatic conditions laid it waste, it was in some respects one of the most prosperous and progressive agricultural areas.

Religion is well established. Four-fifths of the people are Protestant. Leading denominations average 15. Next to the South this region has the most churches of any region in proportion to population. Next to the South and Middle West it has the highest percentage of population in the churches.

Church decline has resulted from the calamitous conditions that have befallen parts of the area. However, it has been the churches of the old American pioneers rather than those established by European immigrants that have suffered. Those of the former have gradually died, while those of the immigrants have survived.

The status of the two types as revealed in a study of 266 churches in three rural counties of eastern Nebraska by A. B. Hollingshead is shown in Table 66.

It is interesting to note that the churches of the old Americans merely "saved souls," competed with one another, and died, while those of the immigrants stood for organized community life, and survived.

This region seems to have a fairly settled and adequate supply of

Table 66

RELATIVE DECADENCE OF PIONEER AND IMMIGRANT CHURCHES
IN NEBRASKA IN 1935 ^a

Group	Per Cent of Total Organized	Per Cent Closed	Per Cent Alive in 1935
Pioneer	70.7	90.9	47.2
Immigrant	29.3	9.1	52.8

^a A. B. Hollingshead, "The Life Cycle of Nebraska Rural Churches," *Rural Sociology*, June, 1937, pp. 180-191.

ministers, tho pastorates are short. Only two other regions have so many full-time resident pastors, and only three have fewer pastorless churches. In the villages three-fourths of the pastors are in residence. No other region equals this. For the open country churches it takes third rank in the percentage of resident pastors.

In material things the churches of this region seem to lag behind general economic conditions.

7. *The Southwest Region.* This includes Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and part of Missouri. It is a region of contrasting physical and economic features, including mountains and plains, arid and well-watered areas. The western part of Oklahoma and the panhandle of Texas lie in the Dust Bowl. Agriculture is generally confined to one crop, tho that crop is not the same in the several parts of the area.

This is the meeting ground of the South and the West, with a civilization that savors of both. The stock is often quite as heterogeneous as the country is diversified.

In three states more than half the farmers are tenants. Poverty prevails.

In the churches denominationalism is strong. Sects are numerous, and duplicate organizations of similar bodies are common. In part this is because there are Northern and Southern branches of several sects. Thirteen general denominations enroll 90 per cent of the religious element. The church is largely Protestant. Overchurching is not so pronounced as in most sections. The section is char-

acterized, like the Range and Pacific, by a marked degree of failure of religion to lay hold of the people. The Protestant faith does not claim more than 12 to 13 per cent of the population.

The churches have few full-time resident ministers. Many churches are pastorless, and a large per cent of the country churches are on circuits.

There is here a large tenant class, which the church, as generally elsewhere, fails to reach.

On most other points the church status of this section closely resembles that of the South.

8. *The Range Region.* The mountain states of the West make up this area. Rough and semi-arid, there is very little improved land. Stock grazing, dry-farming, and irrigation dominate. Naturally, settlements are scattered, and the homesteaders restless and isolated. It is decidedly the frontier area of today.

The stock is chiefly old American but with a foreign element constituting about 25 per cent of the population. There are a good many Mexicans in the southern parts of the region.

The rural church, if we except that of the Mormons, is the least flourishing of any part of America. Like the civilization in general of that region, it struggles for a foothold. Fewer denominations are found than elsewhere except in New England. The Mormon church enrolls more than half the religious population in two states and nearly a fourth of it in two more. For the whole region Protestants and Catholics are about equal in strength.

The region is marked by underchurching and religious indifference such as we meet in no other section. Parishes are large, averaging as much as 75 square miles. There is one church to about 1,200 of the population. About half of the communities and a fifth of the population are without Protestant churches.

As one would expect of a growing country, the churches here are generally growing. Mission-aid has been extended out of all proportion to need; for it inspires selfish denominational ambitions which keep alive churches that are superfluous and neglect wholly unchurched areas. But for this, some churches that were better dead

would have succumbed.³³ Here the churches of the "emotional sects" rise and decline rapidly.³⁴ Since 1930 marked gains in church membership and some rise in the ratio of attendance to the whole population are reported.³⁵

Save only the Pacific region, the proportion of resident ministers, especially in the towns, is the largest. There is so much centering of church forces in the towns that the church has been called "the church of the center."³⁶ During the late twenties the non-resident country preachers increased until two-thirds of the open-country churches were served by them.³⁷ No section has so great a transient, "vagrant" and short-tenure ministry as this one.

Tenantry is not excessive here and, contrary to the rule, more of this class than of the landowners are church members.

The Sunday School is in greater favor and more flourishing than the church. There are many independent schools. Altogether their enrollment exceeds church membership. Young people's societies are generally found in connection with the churches. Revivals are largely depended upon to recruit church members.

The general expenses of the church in this and the Pacific region are higher than in other regions.

While the Range is a man's country, the church is a woman's organization. Men constitute probably less than a third of the membership of the Protestant churches. The church was one of the things the homesteader left behind when he came west. Nor has the church followed him as it ought. Hence "absence of church has become a habit" and 'mid unstable and transient conditions indifference prevails.³⁸ The late comers, however, are more responsive than the "old timers." The churches of this region, when scored by reasonable standards of adequacy, stand near the bottom.

9. *The Pacific Region.* The Pacific coast states are included in this area. The widest variety of conditions are found. California has dry-farming, dairying and extensive fruit growing, but Oregon and Washington have more lumbering than general farming or

³³ Helen O. Belknap, *The Church of the Changing Frontier*, p. 68.

³⁴ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-216.

³⁵ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-304.

³⁷ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

³⁶ Belknap, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

³⁸ Belknap, *op. cit.*, pp. 67, 68.

fruit culture. Economically, it is a prosperous region. More than in any other save the Colonial the people are concentrated in urban districts. Church membership falls lowest.

Here as on the Range, the churches are growing. In recent years a large number of migrants from the Dust Bowl have caused a relatively large growth of church membership and a slightly greater ratio of church attendance to the total population.³⁹ Twenty-eight per cent of the rural churches were receiving mission aid in the twenties. In only about a third of the communities did it have other than a purely sectarian object. Here, as on the Range, the "emotional sects" flourish, giving rise to a high birth rate and a high death rate among the churches.

As in all other sections, there is a definite trend of church activities to the village centers. Probably half the membership of village churches is from the farms.⁴⁰ Here, as elsewhere, the church encounters keen competition from a variety of social organizations and activities that offer more attractive social programs.

This region leads in full-time resident pastors in the town and country churches. The open country congregations are the best supplied of any region with full or part time ministers.

The population is heterogeneous. There are all kinds and sorts of native Americans mingled with a fairly large foreign-born element.

There are almost as many leading denominations here as in the Middle West. Catholics and Protestants are about equal. Only the Range has more rural communities without Protestant churches. Again, next to the Range, this region has the largest average number of rural inhabitants per church. Parishes are about the size of those in the Middle West. In 1936 pastors' salaries were the lowest of all regions for full-time resident ministers, tho better than the South for non-resident ministers.⁴¹

The tenant class here does not respond to the churches' appeal as do farm owners.

As on the Range, the Sunday School enrollment exceeds the church membership.

³⁹ Brunner and Lorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-304.

⁴⁰ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 209. ⁴¹ Brunner and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

All in all, the churches of this region score higher on the average, when graded according to "par standards," than those of any other region.

Reasonable Standards

From the foregoing summary of conditions as reported largely by the surveys of the Institute of Social and Religious Research and the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, numerous characteristics of the rural church appear. Conspicuous among them in varying degrees from region to region are overchurching, some underchurching, church stagnation and abandonment, ministerial "vivisection," poorly trained, poorly paid, and restless pastors, insufficient local organization, sectarian rivalry and community neglect, inadequate physical equipment, failure to reach all classes, the lack of proper religious education and the absence of social programs.

These shortcomings trace to many general cultural and historical causes as well as to numerous regional and purely rural factors of development and change. Apart from measures that will alter the economic and cultural status of the region in which they prevail, many of these problems defy solution, for institutions cannot be treated apart from their environment. Other problems of the rural churches are within reach of intelligent social effort. In fact, in every section of America there are churches that have successfully grappled with them and become effective social agencies.⁴² The actual experiences of these churches were taken by the Institute of Social and Religious Research as a basis for setting up a working program for rural churches, known as the "par standard." This is defined "not as an ideal, but as a measurable example of what the church may, in all reasonableness, expect to attain."⁴³

In bare outline the salient points of the standard may be stated:

1. An auditorium adequate for church services; rooms and equip-

⁴² See E. de S. Brunner, *Churches of Distinction in Town and Country*, and *Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches*.

⁴³ Morse and Brunner, *The Town and Country Church in the United States*, 1923, p. 167.

ment sufficient for educational, social and recreational purposes; a playground; and a comfortable parsonage.

2. Sunday School and other educational and missionary activities maintained regularly thruout the year.

3. A regular church budget, including benevolences raised by an every-member canvass.

4. A resident full-time pastor paid a living salary plus a house.

5. A program of weekly Sunday worship, a mid-week meeting, community-wide work with all classes not served by other churches, definite goals of work to be set up by the congregation for each year, and organized activities for all the various age and sex groups of the community.

6. Coöperation with all other churches, denominational and interdenominational agencies, and welfare agencies for community betterment.

Community Churches

Many of the chief problems of country churches can be solved only by coöperation. In fact, this may be the only way that the crisis confronting them can generally be met. Various schemes have been worked out calling for denominational coöperation for uniting weak churches; for organizing a number of open country churches into one parish centering in a village, under what is known as the "Larger Parish" plan; and for similar devices of readjustment. Thus under one form or another the community church has appeared.

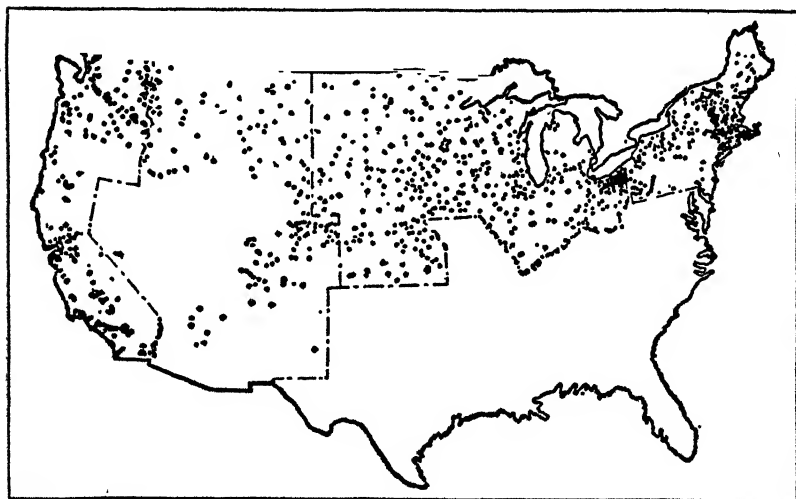
The extent and mode of the movement for the organization of the community church was disclosed in a survey conducted during the twenties by the Institute of Social and Religious Research.⁴⁴ Every section of the United States except the South was canvassed. That section was omitted because there was no evidence that the movement had made any headway there. Every effort was made to locate the new type of church. Many so-called community churches were, however, found to be such only in name, hence only

⁴⁴ See Robert W. McCulloch, "The New Church of the Rural Community," *The Survey*, Vol. 52, No. 6, Dec. 15, 1926, pp. 369-371.

the churches that had so completely altered the conventional organization as to fellowship persons of all Protestant faiths were listed.

The survey disclosed a total of 977 such churches. They were most numerous in southern New England, Ohio, Washington, California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Kansas. Figure 77 shows the distribution.

Four distinct types were recognized by the Institute. (1) The *denominational* type represents a union where one or more churches



77. Distribution of United Rural Churches

The dots on the map show the location of 977 united churches found in the survey, which covered every part of the United States except the South.

Source: R. W. McCulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

have left their own denomination to merge in another and pass under its control.⁴⁵ These were the most numerous of new type churches. A total of 491 was found. They were most common in the Far West. (2) The *federated* church is a union where each of the uniting bodies keeps its affiliations with its own denomination.

⁴⁵ This type of church is fully discussed by Elizabeth Hooker in *United Churches*, Harper and Bros., 1927.

There were 312 such churches. They were most numerous in the East. (3) A third type is called *undenominational*, since neither the new church nor any of the bodies uniting in it hold any denominational connections whatsoever. Only 137 of these were found. They were chiefly in the Middle West. (4) The fourth type is called *affiliated*, since a loose connection is kept for certain purposes with some denomination. Such churches are of recent origin and few in number. There were but 37 listed.

In these four types of new churches were found Protestants of fifty or more faiths, but chiefly the Northern Baptist, the Congregationalist, the Methodist Episcopal, and the Presbyterian faiths. These communions furnished 88 per cent of the 928 denominational churches that had actually entered into the unions.

It is significant that the movement is essentially a small village and open country phenomenon. Less than 4 per cent of the new churches were found in places of from 2,500 to 5,000 population. Five-sixths of the number were in communities of 1,000 or less population.

This development is both new and nation wide. Only 44 of the churches whose history could be traced dated as far back as 1912. Generally the reorganization had been brought about by the efforts of lay leaders. The motive for union was in most cases the desire to do away with overchurching. It did not seem to be anti-denominational. That it has in a measure accomplished denominational elimination appears from the fact that the new church was the only church in about 45 per cent of the half of the total number of Union churches studied. It was the only Protestant church in about 55 per cent of the communities involved in the sample.

These churches are reported to have the favor and financial support of non-church people in their respective communities. They have a better paid, better educated, and a more settled ministry than churches of the ordinary kind. They are able to carry on unusually successful welfare work in their communities and tend to fulfill the social function which a growing number of people would assign this institution. In other words, the church becomes a means rather than an end, an agency to build up communities.

However, the new type in general seems to be rather unstable, with many tendencies to frequent reorganization. Altho there is a growing attitude among the leading Protestant denominations to favor the Union movement, the depression has brought a counter trend. New competition has arisen from the efforts of unemployed preachers to revive closed and unneeded churches in many parts of the land.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Why have rural churches generally not consolidated along with rural schools?
2. What neglected activities for the community good would you like to see rural churches with which you are familiar sponsor?
3. To which of the following would you assign the most influence in causing rural church decline, a shrinking country population, a shrinking agricultural economy, a changing community, or a loss of interest in religion?
4. How far, if at all, are the objectives of the rural church changing?
5. Which is likely to contribute more to the social life and progress of a rural village, spirited competition or harmonious coöperation among the churches?
6. Do farm families attend church as a unit more or less than they did before the automobile and the radio?
7. Which makes the greater appeal to rural youth, the church or the non-church organizations of the rural community with which you are most familiar?
8. Is the church of your community influencing other institutions or is it more influenced by them?
9. What is the attitude of the church of your community to the government's program of service for farmers? What should its role be in this respect?

RURAL PLAY AND RECREATION

The Nature of Play

WHATEVER else it may be, play is the expenditure of surplus physical and psychic energy. To act is animal and human; all normal beings are impelled to exert themselves, and when this is done naturally, spontaneously and under circumstances that give pleasure and emotional satisfaction, we call it play.

Obviously play and work are closely associated on the scale of activities. Where one leaves off and the other begins, depends upon the individual and a multitude of conditioning circumstances. What may be play for one will be work for another, and *vice versa*; or what may be play at one time may become work at another time; or the reverse.

There are, of course, certain classes of activities that we customarily call work and other classes that we call play. The two are generally distinguished by the presence or absence of vocational and remunerative factors. Patently a National League ball game is play or recreation for the spectators, but work for the players, since it is the latter's vocation and means of livelihood. Thus what is one man's trade is another man's play. But, clearly enough, numerous activities are deemed to be diversions by the masses and for the masses of men.

There are two great classes of diversions, which we may designate as natural and artificial. The natural are really vocations that for society as a whole have become antiquated. Hunting, fishing, camping in the open, once means of living, are now means of play for a higher civilization. Likewise, in some measure, cultivating the soil and growing plants, outgrown means of existence for the majority of people in western society, are often reverted to for pure

pleasure by those who have the opportunity. The artificial activities are those that have been designed for pleasure alone. These include games of all kinds, the dance, the drama, and various other activities.

A broader classification results if we consider more specific human wants and their satisfaction. Among them are: (1) the desire for new experiences; (2) the desire for sociability; (3) the desire for activity; and (4) the desire for conflict and mastery.¹

Under the first group will fall in large part hunting and fishing, camping, dramatics, the moving pictures. The second group will include the dance, the "sociable," the picnic, and numerous other provisions for association for its own sake. In the third group will be found field sports and athletics. To the fourth belong all sorts of games of contest.

Conditions Determining the Character of Play

The conditions determining the character of play are so many that it would be unprofitable to try to catalogue them. However, we shall try to indicate certain outstanding ones that have particular significance in relation to rural society.

1. *Surplus energy.* If there is a superabundance of physical strength and animal spirit left over from the struggle for a livelihood, people will normally want to utilize it in play that is strenuous. Athletic diversions will appeal; not necessarily to the exclusion of other types of recreation, but preferably to them. If there is only a little margin of physical energy left, there will either be no play at all, something of a psychic nature, or perhaps some sort of excessive indulgence of the appetites.

Farming makes heavy drafts on physical strength and relatively little on mental energy. As a rule, during the busy season at least there will not be much surplus energy available for strenuous play. The never-ending call to work at the never-finished labor of the farm does not foster active play. The normal expression would be

¹ Davis, Barnes, and others, *Introduction to Sociology*, D. C. Heath and Co., 1927, p. 768.

some sort of mental activity. However, whatever the outlet should be, many individuals do not rise above the physical plane, so that when its possibilities are exhausted they have no taste for anything else and lapse into pure idleness. How far this applies to farmers as a class is a mooted question. If it be true that the occupation has selected an unusually large number of the stolid and ox-like, then we should expect to find but little zest for play on the psychic plane.

As will appear from play data farther on, there is a marked tendency for the mature farm population to prefer an inactive type of recreation. Indoor games, visiting, and picnics seem to appeal more than strenuous outdoor games or active indoor sports. It has been said: "Tongue exercise is what is more needed in the country than biceps exercise."

2. Surplus energy ordinarily implies *leisure*, else there will not be opportunity for play. Much depends upon how the spare time is distributed, whether it occurs at regular or irregular intervals and in brief or long periods, as to what sort of play one can pursue. Urban work is commonly done in fairly short hours and at stated times, giving more definite periods for leisure. On the farm the shifts are long, tasks irregularly ordered, and leisure more limited and uncertain. In the growing season there is little spare time of any sort. Under these different conditions the city man can make provision for regular recreation, but the country man finds it difficult to plan the use of his broken leisure hours. There is, however, a very great diversity of conditions in agriculture and no statement as to the amount and disposal of leisure can be made that will fit everywhere.

3. *Occupations*, therefore, constitute a third condition determining play, not only because they govern leisure, but because they select people of different types and help to develop in them different temperaments. Take, for instance, an industrial wage earner in comparison with the owner-manager of the plant. The one is care-free insofar as the occupation is concerned when he is off the job; the other can hardly leave his responsibilities behind when he locks up shop. The one may find his work dreadfully monotonous and uninteresting; the other, for all his burdens, may find

his challenging and stimulating. Presumably men will emerge from the two situations with different dispositions and attitudes. If we contrast the farmer's occupation with these, we find a man who is both manager and laborer. But he is never carefree, because he must live in his occupation; and never greatly stimulated, for Nature, the ultimate manager, always restricts his operations. Inevitably the farmer's occupation is much more a part of his life than are those occupations from which men can escape at the end of the day a part of the lives of those who pursue them. Therefore the farmer has a disposition that is more or less different, and his play choices will ordinarily be different.

4. Various occupations limit play in one way and another because their pursuit determines what is available. So the fourth condition is *available means*. The city offers numerous artificial modes of recreation to those who can afford them. The opportunities are more abundant on the mental and emotional than on the physical side, due to environmental restrictions. The types of play are, however, wide in range and rich in content. The country is poor in artificial means by virtue of the sparsity of population, limitations of wealth, and lack of talent, but rich in natural means. There is every chance for outdoor recreation. Possibly we can say that the country and the city are each deficient in what the other has the most of. If the farmer's normal play needs to be on the psychic plane, it is clear that his environment does not supply adequate opportunity.

These restrictions in range of opportunity make for diverse play interests as between city and country. For instance, the Boy Scout program does not appeal to the country as to the city boy, for "the farm boy is saturated with out-of-doors, already saturated with the fields, with the woods, the streams, the open sky, the great spaces, the open road, and nature as a whole; while the city boy is a dry sponge ready to soak it all up, and, moreover, the Scout program is invented for and fitted for the dry sponge alone."²

Further, it should be borne in mind that agriculture is seasonal

² C. J. Galpin, *Rural Boys and the Boy Scouts*. Address at the annual meeting of Scout Executives, 1924, pamphlet of United States Department of Agriculture.

in its nature. The months that afford the greatest possibilities for play are consumed by work and those that afford the least play opportunity out-of-doors bring the most leisure for it. The reverse prevails in many urban occupations.

5. What play opportunities are available depends not only upon the natural environment, but quite as much upon social tradition and organization. Therefore a fifth condition is *custom*, shaped by moral and religious belief as well as by occupational habits and racial experiences. Numerous racial, national, class, and institutional groups, each having its play customs, give rise to much variety in both urban and rural society. In the rural area there is, however, more variety than in the urban. This is to be explained by the greater tendency of city conditions to determine uniformity in certain ranges of custom.

The Function of Play

The service of play to human society can scarcely be overestimated. So important is its function that it would be hard to apportion the contributions made to civilization between work and play with any degree of fairness. We can best emphasize its function by viewing it under three heads—physical, psychological, and sociological:

1. Play is indispensable to a full development of the body. As the normal way of expending surplus energy, it stimulates the emotions, and ordinarily brings the whole physical being into action, with the result that there is higher energizing, quickened functions, and the establishment of better and fuller coördination. Not so work, which canalizes activities and confines exercise to particular parts of the body until sooner or later the body often cries out against this unfair treatment and the emotions are depressed. When that happens, play, "the positive side of the health program," becomes the means of restoration.

2. Psychologically, play quickens thinking, makes alert, and gives resourcefulness as nothing else does. John Dewey says it is required to "introduce variety, flexibility, and sensitiveness into disposition."

Among those who do not habitually play, dullness of mind, feeble imagination, touchy dispositions, warped judgment, and strong aversions to new ideas are to be observed. It is generally recognized that the most playful are the most educable. Play, releasing the emotions, removes discouragements, mental restraints, and inner irritations. There is positive gain in freedom. Unless provision is made for this emotional experience, mental disorders are invited. Herbert Spencer called play a safety valve. To the tired mind it brings refreshment, as sleep to the body. Play that brings exercise to the body of the mentally tired gives relief from nervous tension.

There is a psychological necessity for emotional release. Some sort of indulgence is indispensable and will be secured in one way or another. There is no better way than thru wholesome play. In the absence of it there will arise perverted and demoralizing practices. "Games," says Gillin, "produce the emotional equivalent of ancient gladiatorial combats, mediaeval pageants and tournaments; of modern political barbecues, religious revivals, primitive social orgies, alcoholic 'sprees,' and religious persecutions."³

There is unquestionably a need for more play as a foil to vicious means of emotional expression that tend to flourish where life is most monotonous, dull, and joyless. It is in such communities that lynchings, Ku Klux Klan depredations, wild religious revivalism, and alcoholic "sprees" occur. Genuine play would give a wholesome means of outlet and emotional satisfaction to people who in its absence resort to the practices mentioned.

Country people, like all others, must have play to develop normal and wholesome minds.

3. Sociologically, play is of the highest importance, above all as a *promoter of association per se*. Under no other circumstances do people associate so easily as in play. It submerges class, race, and religious differences, allays or destroys hatreds and animosities, and promotes positive social sympathies. Instances might be cited where rural neighborhoods split asunder by class jealousies and antagonistic efforts have been maneuvered by impartial leaders into playing together until feuds have been laid aside and forgotten.

* J. L. Gillin, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 19, p. 830.

Again, it *fosters coöperation and social discipline*. The Duke of Wellington when visiting Eton is said to have looked upon the playground and remarked, "Here was won the battle of Waterloo." In other words, Englishmen had learned how to pull together in play on those grounds and had carried the ability with them into the nation's affairs. From childhood up the individual must learn to adjust his actions to those of others. There is nothing like play to train him in this.

A New England town had* tried again and again without success to form a coöperative marketing association. Finally, after the project had been dropped, a singing school was organized and met regularly for a sing and a good time. Thru it the participants learned the art of association and soon were able to unite in a co-operative enterprise for business purposes.

No training is equal to play for social discipline. All games have their rules to which players must conform. There must be loyalty to leaders, fairness to fellows, readiness to accept defeat gracefully and success modestly. External coercion being lacking, habits are formed spontaneously and effectively. Good sportsmanship is as necessary in the social system as good workmanship. No training is equal to play for this discipline. Denied play opportunities, the individual is likely to become a dangerous member of society, menacing its higher standards and corrupting its nobler life. Another *result* of play on the social side is the development of community solidarity. Thru games togetherness grows up in neighborhoods. A "we" feeling emerges. This is especially true where there are teams playing with other communities. As one has said: "But once interest children in play, get them to organize teams, design and make a school banner, compose and learn a school cheer, adopt a distinctive athletic custom or even a celluloid button which is to be worn when they go to the next great play festival and compete with other schools, and there will be no lack of community spirit so far as the children are concerned, and the adult population will soon be catching something of it too." * -

* Myron T. Scudder, "The Rural School as a Social Center," *The Playground*, Vol. V, No. 6, p. 202.

Periods of Development and Rural Play

As one stage of development has succeeded another in rural America, the conditions determining play have undergone alteration. Therefore the type of play also has changed. If we trace this evolution it will enable us to understand better the present recreational habits and needs of country people.

1. *Play under pioneer conditions.* A self-sufficient agriculture, hoe-farming, excessive toil, extreme isolation and undeveloped institutions characterized the rural community of pioneer days. There was not much surplus energy among a people struggling hard for a living. Leisure was a luxury indeed for the pioneer man and his household. The chief recreation grew directly out of the necessary labors. It was home made. There was but little play for play's sake.

Many work undertakings called for mutual aid. Building cabins and barns, log-rolling in clearing the land, harvesting crops, making roads, and numerous other kinds of work brought neighbors together in "bees." The whole family frequently turned out on such occasions. When the barn or cabin was up, the corn husked, the quilting finished, the laborers joined in a celebration. This might be only a basket dinner, but often it was a dance or an impromptu merrymaking. It became the custom to end a "bee" in this fashion. People looked forward to the celebration as part of the program. It was the pay due one's neighbors for their kindly services. The "raising" was almost sure to end in a "hoe down." Even where religious sentiment disapproved of the dance, it was difficult to prevent such "frollicks" altogether. They were rude, boisterous affairs, but they satisfied the emotional needs as few things did.

Another means of pleasure was drink. Almost everybody drank and many did it to excess. Hard cider and rum flowed freely at all celebrations. What was offered to drink was one of the attractions at every "bee." It did not matter whether the "bee" was a corn husking or a church raising. Naturally a good deal of horse play and rowdyism went with the drinking.

Where men came together there was always rivalry in the exhibition of skill and individual prowess. They raced with scythes or

cradles in cutting hay and grain, with axes in chopping, and with teams in pulling. There were wrestling, lifting, and jumping contests. These were common ways of playing in every community.

Pioneer religion, with its camp meetings and revivals, also afforded a kind of recreation. These were often frenzied affairs in which people were carried away with fear and superstitious belief. Nevertheless these occasions furnished diversion and emotional outlet.

Hunting and fishing were common everywhere, sometimes giving rise to hunting parties, such as wolf and fox hunts, prairie-chicken "shoots," a bee-tree cutting, a pigeon-roost raid, or a fish-spearing party.

Altho similar primitive conditions led to similar means of recreation, there was local variation. New England suppressed pleasure as much as possible. It was singularly austere and joyless compared with other sections. The South encouraged it even to voluptuousness. The Middle West, where East and South met, was a region of divided attitudes. The Far West, as it opened up, became even more so.

The pioneers were as a rule characterized by emotional instability induced by the necessity of following many occupations incidental to the exigencies of a self-sufficient economy. This tended to induce extremes in all activities. Their play, their work, their religion were no half-hearted affairs. Limited tho it was in variety and amount, the pioneers indulged excessively, when at all, in such play as we have described.

2. The *Land-Farming Period*, with fully settled communities, well-established institutions, land mostly under cultivation, thriving villages, world markets opened up by railways, machinery being introduced on the farms, and a stable population, gave new conditions for play. There was somewhat more leisure, less extreme isolation, better means of travel, more comfortable living, and withal more cultural interests among farmers.

The recreations of the pioneers were supplemented by many new ones. There was not so much need of mutual aid; hence "bees" and the celebrations accompanying them were much less frequent.

Sheep-washings, sheep-shearings and threshings, with an occasional barn-raising, were the chief group activities. The church and the school tended to introduce more refined occasions for recreation. There came the "singing school," the "spelling school," "school exhibitions," now and then a "literary" or "debating society," the "donation party" for the minister, the "box social" and the picnic.

Villages promoted many new occasions for rural enjoyment—Fourth of July celebrations, "Old Settlers' Days," County Fairs, political party rallies and jollifications in campaign years, Memorial Day programs and the circus. They also supported lodges and pool halls. Farmers were drawn to town by these events and opportunities, but the weekly journey thither to trade and get the mail became a more significant custom of this period. Such trips became a means of recreation of some importance for the country people. At the village, neighbors and friends met and visited. Saturdays or Mondays, according to local custom, thus became a sort of holiday. In parts of the South the practice was associated with the monthly "Court Day." "Going to town" of Saturdays is still a regular holiday event for the country Negroes of the Gulf States. The practice must be classed as a distinctive form of recreation during this period. For many it was about the only diversion.

Visiting among friends and kinsfolk, especially of Sundays, also came into vogue at this time. Sunday visiting was taboo in New England and often frowned upon in religious communities of the Middle West.

One of the most distinctive pleasures that came to flourish at this time thruout the Middle West was the "play party." This was devoted to certain games which were much in favor with youth. The games were what is known as "ring games," with a song accompanying a kind of waltz or two step. The choosing of partners with a kissing formula was the rule. These games were evidently survivals of old English folk-songs and dances. Somehow they had been carried over from the Old World thru the pioneer times to blossom forth in the new era. They sprang up to meet a need where musicians, dancing-floors and other opportunities for play were limited. Any gathering could without forethought start such games

if someone knew the song and the formula or could improvise them. A few examples out of a great range of titles may be cited: "Four Brave Commanders," "Happy Is the Miller," "Weevilly Wheat," "I've Been to the East, I've Been to the West," "Needle's Eye," "Skip to My Lou," "Chase the Squirrel," "Down in Alabama," "Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley," "Old Dan Tucker," "Jim Along Jo," "I'll Be the Reaper," "Farmer in the Dell," "Pop Goes the Weasel," "Pig in the Parlor," "The Girl I Left Behind Me." There was the widest difference between localities and sections in the versions of the songs, for the verses were transmitted wholly by word of mouth. The game itself, however, was quite the same everywhere.

The common name given to the play party was the "kissing bee." In many places the older people joined in the games and had as much fun out of them as youth. Sometimes the osculatory formula was banned, and where religious influences were overstrong, often the party itself.

The play party with its "ring games" seems to have vanished as sophistication grew in the social life of the community. By the end of the period its day was pretty well past except in unusually isolated sections. In such localities echoes of it may still be heard.⁵

The latter part of the period saw the rise of the Grange, which emphasized the social and recreational side of life. Where it flourished, play was promoted thru its ritual and by entertainments, picnics, dinners, and fairs held under its auspices. Since it catered to the entire family, these were opportunities of no mean value.

3. The *Exploiter Period*, ushering in highly commercialized agriculture, land speculation, farm tenancy, the rural free delivery, the telephone, the rural exodus, and church and school decline, created another set of conditions influencing the mode of play.

Certain play activities of the former period began to recede into the background. The agricultural fair had generally gone down, school and church entertainments were less numerous, the play

⁵ For an interesting discussion of the play party, see articles in *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vols. 28, 33, Nos. 107, 128, by E. F. Piper and Emelyn E. Gardner.

party had died out, and holiday celebrations were less fostered by the towns. There were indications that play was less vital than hitherto. However, there were some new developments of a positive sort. The towns were unquestionably strengthening their appeal. New ties were being made by retiring farm families, by the rural delivery and the telephone, by high schools patronized in increasing degree by country boys and girls. There were more town dwelling clergymen ministering to country churches. The more wide-awake villages began to provide band concerts once a week during the summer. Lodges multiplied, Chautauquas came into vogue, the traveling theatrical troupe appeared, baseball was often organized, concert courses were provided for the winter, dancing clubs and many other attractions were offered by the villages. Thus a larger circle of farm people than before came to find entertainment at these centers. This was noticeable in some sections more than in others, especially in the Far West, perhaps. "Even in the days of the horse and buggy," says Yoder, "the farm families of Washington . . . early developed the habit of finding most of their recreation in the towns."⁶

In many open country communities, where not kept out by the church, Sunday baseball appeared. Farmers' picnics became organized events in numerous localities. The family reunion sprang up in the Middle West. This period saw the rise and decline of the bicycle, which in a limited way was a source of pleasure.

4. A *Fourth Period* came in the second decade of the century with the advent of the automobile. It overlapped the Exploiter Period by about a decade. It turned out to be an era of agricultural decline, rural readjustment and reorganization. The new developments influencing recreation have been summarized as follows: "(1) the breakdown of the social solidarity of old neighborhoods and communities; (2) new methods of transportation and communication, with the consequent more intensive contact with the city; (3) the expansion of commercialized forms of recreation, such as dance halls, roadhouses, and movies, in rural areas; (4) the increase of

⁶ F. R. Yoder, "Some Better Things in Farm Life in Washington," State College of Washington, Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 195*, p. 12.

rural recreational activities; and (5) an increasing belief in the value of recreation."⁷

With the automobile came the use of motor power and new mechanical devices, the extension of good roads, the expansion of rural mail routes, telephone service, and, finally, the general introduction of motion pictures and the radio. Thru these agencies recreational possibilities for young and old alike were greatly increased.

The automobile itself was a recreative boon to country people, not only for pleasure riding, but also for opening up a wider world and for stimulating to more leisure time activity. It made it possible for the family to avail itself of whatever was within a drive of an hour or so. It made the town with its motion pictures and other commercialized agencies of entertainment wholly accessible. At the same time many new organizations fostering recreation appeared. These include the Farm Bureau, the Farm and Home Demonstration work, the Boys' and Girls' 4-H Clubs, Coöperative Associations, local Farmers' Clubs, the consolidated school, the high school, and various other agencies. The fact that so many have recreation programs is indicative of a growing appreciation of the value of play on the part of country people.

Generally speaking, the farmer has probably acquired more leisure and more free energy from the use of motor power devices. But has this resulted in more play? The use of the new facilities would have to be balanced against the loss or neglect of older ones, and the leisure checked by its manner of employment before the answer could be given.

Withal, this period is characterized by much catered amusement in contrast to the local self-sufficiency and recreational resourcefulness of the past. Country folk tend more and more to become spectators instead of participators. Thus it becomes possible to say: "Rural recreation is now largely inspired from without the community, not from within; from the city, not from the country. In the place of the free, spontaneous recreations of the country-

⁷ Bruce L. Melvin and Edna N. Smith, "Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects," *WPA Research Monograph XV*, 1938, p. 71.

side there are such commercialized amusements as professional athletes and the amusement park.”⁸

Since 1920, with the decline of many rural organizations outside the economic field, certain lines of entertainment and play have been neglected. Lodges and fraternal orders have lost vogue everywhere. Informal, non-commercial, and spontaneous forms of play have received more attention. In brief, when catered amusement and organized recreation could no longer be afforded, people returned to simpler forms, such as, hunting, fishing, visiting, games, dancing, music, dramatics, and types of activities that they themselves can readily devise.⁹

Apart from the influence of the automobile, motion-pictures, and the radio, and the programs of the new types of rural organizations, it is doubtful if the recreational pattern of the countryside has undergone much change in the last twenty-five years. Informal and spontaneous activities have always been the most important means of entertainment. Even rural dramatics are old. From time to time, the emphasis has shifted, but basically rural people continue to rely pretty much upon traditional ways of satisfying their play interests.

Rural Play Inventoried

No comprehensive survey of rural play activities has been made, but a number of studies in sample areas throw light on conditions. In the West, Rankin's survey of 1,141 Nebraska families in ten farm areas disclosed the fact that a sixth of the households played outdoor games of various kinds; about half attended athletic contests as spectators; two-thirds indulged in indoor games; one-third were gameless; six-sevenths attended fairs; four-fifths, picnics; three-fifths, parties and celebration; a fourth, dances; one-sixth, games; and nearly half, "movies." Rankin concluded that some of the recreational needs were being well met, but some not

⁸ W. C. Nason, Rural Planning, United States Department of Agriculture *Bulletin* No. 1388, p. 1.

⁹ Brunner and Kolb, *Rural Social Trends*, p. 266; Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, pp. 250-251.

at all.¹⁰ Peirce found in three Iowa townships that from a third to half the farm families frequently attended "movies"; from 2 to 40 per cent, Sunday baseball games; from a third to a majority, picnics; occasionally a family in one township to two-thirds in another went to church socials; and about a fourth attended dances in localities where they were not taboo. Neighborhood Sunday visiting was the chief recreation of four-fifths of all families.¹¹

Lively and Miller listed the leisure-time activities of 300 rural young people 16 to 24 years of age in nine Ohio townships in 1934. Table 67 gives the data.

Studies in Genesee and Tompkins Counties, New York, by Mildred B. Thurow and W. A. Anderson reveal the leisure-time activities of over 1,000 rural unmarried men and women 15 to 29 years of age.¹² The most frequent activities were indoor games and passive diversions, educational cultural interests, parties, hobbies, arts and crafts, household affairs, dramatics, and commercial amusements.

The three highest on the list for men in order of preference altho the majority pursued but one or two of them, were outdoor sports, indoor sports, and outings. Commercial amusements also were stressed. The young women put indoor passive interests first, and often second and third, altho household activities, outdoors sports, outings, commercial amusements, and parties held important places. A study by Anderson of the married people of the same age group in Tompkins County showed similar activities and interests.¹³

The preferences of these young men and women for recreational

¹⁰ J. O. Rankin, "Nebraska Farm Tenancy," University of Nebraska, Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 196*, pp. 32-43.

¹¹ P. S. Peirce, "Social Surveys of Three Rural Townships in Iowa," *University of Iowa Mimeographs*, Series 12, Vol. V, Pt. II, p. 83.

¹² Mildred B. Thurow, "Interests, Activities, and Problems of Rural Young Folk," Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 617*, Dec., 1934; W. A. Anderson, "Rural Youth: Interests, and Problems, II, Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age," Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 661*, Jan., 1937.

¹³ W. A. Anderson, "Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, I, Married Young Men and Women 15 to 29 Years of Age," Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, *Bulletin No. 649*, May, 1936.

activities was somewhat at variance with what they customarily did. This was especially true of the young women, who stressed the need of social organization to provide recreational opportunities. The men felt the need of more athletics and sports. All wanted wider contacts and recreational guidance.

From the rural New York studies the fact that village boys and girls have a richer play life becomes apparent; also that there is a difference in the quality of the play. The village youth choose

Table 67

LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF RURAL YOUNG PEOPLE, 16 TO 24
YEARS OF AGE IN NINE OHIO TOWNSHIPS ^a

Activity	IN SCHOOL						NOT IN SCHOOL			
	Total		Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent
Total Persons	300	100	94	100	85	100	77	100	44	100
Reading	254	85	81	86	82	96	55	71	36	82
Attending Shows	228	76	77	82	58	68	65	84	28	64
Auto Driving	206	69	70	74	46	54	62	81	28	64
Playing Cards	206	69	68	72	60	71	51	66	27	61
Attending Parties	201	67	69	73	76	89	27	35	29	66
Playing Basket Ball	192	64	54	57	66	78	40	52	27	61
Visiting	191	64	58	62	58	68	53	69	27	61
Listening to Radio	155	52	63	67	38	45	38	49	16	36
Attending Picnics	154	51	53	56	64	75	19	25	18	41
Swimming	150	50	73	78	13	15	57	74	7	16
Playing Baseball	146	49	43	46	44	52	47	61	12	27
Hunting	140	47	75	80	3	4	59	77	3	7
Playing Golf	134	45	61	65	36	42	27	35	10	23
Dancing	131	44	44	47	34	40	36	47	17	39
Fishing	124	41	56	60	27	32	31	40	10	23
Hiking	108	36	44	47	44	52	12	16	8	18
Attending Institutes	107	36	42	45	30	35	25	32	10	23
Singing	98	33	23	24	53	62	9	12	13	30
Playing Musical Inst.	97	32	26	28	41	48	14	18	16	36
Fancy Work	83	28	4	4	48	56	2	3	29	66
Playing Victrola	70	23	19	20	28	33	10	13	13	30
Skating	68	23	34	36	18	21	9	12	7	16
Attending Socials	66	22	22	23	29	34	8	10	7	16
Attending Football Games	63	21	32	34	10	12	17	22	4	9
Coasting	57	19	25	27	18	21	7	9	7	16

Table 67 (continued)

Activity					IN SCHOOL				NOT IN SCHOOL			
	Total				Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent	Num- ber	Per Cent
Camping	54	18	26	28	17	20	5	6	6	14		
Attending Lectures and Concerts	51	17	21	22	20	24	6	8	4	9		
Amateur Dramatics	50	17	14	15	21	25	5	6	10	23		
Playing Croquet	45	15	16	17	20	24	4	5	5	11		
Playing Football	37	12	8	9	11	13	12	16	6	14		
Attending Fairs	29	10	11	12	6	7	8	10	4	9		
Playing Pool & Billiards	23	8	11	12	1	1	11	14	0	0		
Attending Basketball Games	20	7	9	10	2	2	7	9	2	5		
Attending Baseball Games	19	6	5	5	8	9	3	4	3	7		
Painting	14	5	3	3	9	11	1	1	1	2		
Playing Tennis	9	3	2	2	5	6	0	0	2	5		

* C. E. Lively and L. J. Miller, "Rural Young People, 16 to 24 Years of Age—a Survey of the Status and Activities of 300 Unmarried Individuals in Nine Ohio Townships" *Mimeograph Bulletin No. 73*, Dept. of Rural Economics, Ohio State University and Ohio Agr. Exp. Station, July, 1934, p. 16.

more athletics and team play of all sorts. They also dance more.

The more recent studies seem to indicate a shift of play interest toward a greater quantity, a wider variety, and a more active type of play.

Available Opportunities for Satisfying Play Interests

Lively's studies of social agencies in Ohio included a number which provided play. In Table 68 their number and distribution are indicated. Anderson's study of rural youth in Tompkins County, New York, listed the places available for the leisure-time activities of those youth. In Table 69 these data are given.

Such tabulations do not, of course, tell the whole story. More detailed information would list several other facilities and give some idea of how much they are used by the farm families. Nevertheless, the data before us throw light on conditions.

How much use do rural people make of such available recreational facilities? One study of 1,014 farm families in various sections of North Carolina, made by Taylor and Zimmerman, revealed the amount of patronage given picnics, fairs, sociables, movies, holiday celebrations, Chautauquas, lectures, theaters, dances, and other similar forms of amusement and recreation.¹⁴ A computation was made of the per cent of families of which one or more members had participated in one or more events during the preceding year. It was found that 11.2 per cent had attended but one kind of event; 15.7 per cent, two; 22.3 per cent, three; 15.7 per cent, four; and 17.1 per cent, more than four. There remained 18 per

Table 68

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RURAL COMMUNITIES IN OHIO HAVING CERTAIN SOCIAL AGENCIES AND THE TOTAL NUMBER OF EACH IN THE STATE ^a

Agency	Per Cent	Total Number
Number Trade Area Rural Communities—1272 ..	100	
Grange	69	878
Lodges	55	2,233
Pool Halls	42	955
Annual Chautauqua or Lyceum	33	627
Open Societies	26	...
Moving Picture Theater	23	312
Band	22	282
Orchestra	19	250
Public Dance Hall	19	383
Local Newspaper	16	238
Girl Scouts or Camp Fire Girls' Troop	13	138
Boy Scout Troop	12	163
Annual Homecoming	10	124
Parent-Teacher Association	9	145
Annual Picnic or Festival	9	120
Local Library	7	102
Farmers' Club or Community Club	7	94
Annual Corn, Fruit, or Dairy Show	6	22
Chorus or Singing Society	6	83
Community Fair	5	75

^a E. C. Lively, "Some Rural Social Agencies in Ohio," *Ohio State University Extension Bulletin*, Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 46.

¹⁴ C. C. Taylor and C. C. Zimmerman, *Economic and Social Conditions of North Carolina Farmers*, pp. 76-78.

cent of the total number of families from which no one had attended an event.

Table 69

PLACES OF THE LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF THE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN ^a

	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
	Men					
	Num- ber	Num- ber	Num- ber	Per Cent	Per Cent	Per Cent
Home	165	93	49	40	23	12
Friends' home	4	4	1	1	1	0
Church	3	1	3	1	0	1
School	15	12	3	4	3	1
Community parks, centers, or playgrounds	46	23	7	12	6	2
Clubhouses	9	10	4	2	3	1
Vacant lots	22	7	1	6	2	0
Streets	2	8	1	0	2	0
Woods, streams	60	46	10	15	12	3
Commercial amusement places ..	31	53	17	8	13	4
Others	19	11	13	5	3	3
None	23	131	290	6	32	73
Total	399	399	399	100	100	100

	Women					
	Num- ber	Num- ber	Num- ber	Per Cent	Per Cent	Per Cent
Home	227	95	68	62	27	19
Friends' home	11	15	5	3	4	1
Church	1	5	4	0	1	1
School	15	14	5	4	4	1
Community parks, centers, or playgrounds	17	10	2	5	3	1
Clubhouses	5	2	2	1	1	1
Vacant lots	2	4	2	1	1	1
Streets	1	3	1	0	1	0
Woods, streams	16	41	20	5	11	6
Commercial amusement places ..	34	50	24	10	14	7
Others	9	12	6	3	3	1
None	21	108	220	6	30	61
Total	359	359	359	100	100	100

^a W. A. Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Clopper's study of rural child welfare in West Virginia disclosed conditions similar to those just described.¹⁵

Anderson found in the New York county that the home was the chief center for the leisure activities of young men and women. Other centers, such as schools and churches, were used only occasionally. Organizations were involved to some degree, but not extensively. The young men averaged membership in less than one, and the young women in slightly more than one. However, 56 per cent of the young men, and 46 per cent of the young women did not hold membership in any formal organization. These people had an average of three hours daily for leisure activities. The evening was the most available period.¹⁶

In a study of the recreational facilities provided by consolidated rural schools in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, Hayes found athletic fields with more or less equipment for football, baseball,

Table 70

PER CENT OF SCHOOLS WHERE VARIOUS EVENTS WERE HELD
DURING THE YEAR ^a

Events	Per Cent of Schools in La.	Per Cent of Schools in Miss.	Per Cent of Schools in Ala.
Fairs	10.3	22.5	23.5
Community Dances	17.2	2.5	10.9
Athletic Games	39.7	40.	41.3
Picnics, Box Suppers, Barbecues and Banquets	22.4	35.	45.6
School Plays and Entertainments .	24.1	12.5	32.6
Boy Scouts	3.4	..	...
Pageants	1.7	...	...
Literary Society	32.7	37.5	34.7
Moving Pictures	5.1	...	...
Lyceum Courses	13.7	7.5	...
Singing, Public Lectures' .....	...	12.5	2.2
Boys' and Girls' Clubs	27.6	37.5	50

^a A. W. Hayes, "Community Value of the Consolidated Rural School," Tulane University, *Research Bulletin* No. 2, pp. 33, 37, 38.

¹⁵ E. N. Clopper, *Rural Child Welfare*, pp. 40, 41, 131.

¹⁶ Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 20, 36.

tennis, and basketball in 43.1 per cent of such schools in Louisiana; 45 per cent in Mississippi; and 56.5 per cent in Alabama. The preceding table indicates the recreational uses made of these schools thruout the year.

His opinion was that the "consolidated rural schools are rapidly becoming leading forces . . . for stimulating community fairs, boys' and girls' clubs, community pageants, picnics and feasts, athletic contests and similar events."¹⁷

Abel's study of 260 consolidated schools in all parts of the United States disclosed auditoriums in 185 of the buildings, and gymnasiums in approximately 40 per cent of the total number. About one-third had athletics, but only 19 had moving pictures.¹⁸

The data before us probably reflect fairly typical play conditions in rural districts thruout the United States.

Shortcomings and Needs in Rural Recreation

1. The average farm family and community suffer relative play poverty. Principally because of a lack of play philosophy or a disbelief in the value of play, which is an old and persistent attitude of farmers, even when there is leisure, it is not always utilized in positive play, but is spent in either play of a negative character or in idleness.

Farm folk are inclined to hold play unnecessary when there is plenty of work, and by common consent children are made to labor to keep them from becoming shiftless. As a West Virginia farmer put it, "My boy plays with a grubbing hoe, grubbing sprouts and briars. In wet weather he cuts wood. That's the kind of play that's good for him."

Hamlin Garland says of his father: "His own boyhood had been task filled, and he saw nothing unnatural in the regular employment of his children. Having had little play himself, he considered that we were having a very comfortable boyhood."

Traditionally frowned upon for children, play is even more dis-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁸ J. F. Abel, "A Study of 260 School Consolidations," Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, *Bulletin No. 32*, 1924.

countenanced for the grown. Happily there are signs in many if not all sections of the country that the negative attitude is passing. Numerous agencies are carrying the gospel of play to the rural people. And, as we have already observed, the motor vehicle and other new forces are helping to make the country more sympathetic to recreation.

2. A lack of team play is the second deficiency in rural recreation. We have called attention to the social nature and value of play. Normally, both children and adults prefer team games, but in the country opportunities for such activities are limited by the lack of numbers, developed playgrounds, and competent leadership. The result has been the prevalence of individualized games. Team play of a kind was found in the "bees" of earlier days; with their passing, conditions were worsened and have only recently taken a turn for the better.

The advancement of rural life thru organized self-help depends largely upon the farmer's capacity for coöperative effort. Traditionally his deficiency in this is well-known. Altho of late significant gains have been made, a more adequate training would do much to further its development. "The non-social individualism that makes the adult farmer so often unable to coöperate, the petty self-will of the quarreling village community, the brooding over minor wrongs and insults, the social suspicion and jealousy, the frequent inferiority complex of country men—all have their main origins in childhood that developed without the adequate discipline of spontaneous group life."¹⁹ The easiest way to secure this is thru organized team games, in the absence of which both the spirit of team work and the capacity for carrying it on are weak.

Hopeful developments are appearing, however, in connection with consolidated schools. Studies of high school students in Georgia and Illinois show that an average of less than 10 per cent prefer to spend their leisure time alone. Most of them want group activities.²⁰ This is true of those from rural areas as well as those from

¹⁹ H. P. Douglass, *How Shall Country Youth Be Served?* p. 181.

²⁰ H. H. Punke, "Leisure-Time Attitudes and Activities of High-School Students," *School and Society*, June 27, 1936.

towns. The influence of training in group activities in the schools is thus becoming manifest. Altho organized play is slowly growing, not until it is made a part of the regular curriculum in every school, will it get far. Obviously the school is the institution that should provide this training. In the *first* place, the school age is the time for physical development as well as mental, and one is quite as important as the other. *Moreover*, systematic play is needed to relieve the strain of the class room and should be provided to give balanced development. In the *third* place, the activities which children under pioneer conditions enjoyed are for the most part no longer possible. Unless the school provides a substitute in a regular play program, many will grow up without any equivalent experience. The years of education thru activities will be void of the needed training. *Again*, with the decreasing size of the family, sufficiently large play groups outside the consolidated school group are not likely to be assembled for play. Hence the school is the time and the place for play education. In the *fifth* place, competitive games create school loyalty as does nothing else, and if play is to be carried on apart from the school, divided loyalty is bound to weaken the school interest. *Finally*, the school can provide play education at less expense than the community can secure it otherwise. As part of the curriculum it can be directed and supervised more easily and effectively. The management of the playgrounds is easier under school authority, for the children have a greater sense of responsibility in school than out.²¹

To provide adequate play education the school day would have to be extended for an hour or so or the class room work would have to be somewhat curtailed. But to lengthen the day would seem to be the wise thing. Again, a trained play director or teacher would have to be provided for the school staff. The principal for extra pay, if properly educated for it, might well take on this function. Above all, local school boards will have to be persuaded of the value of play in education before so great an innovation can be introduced.

3. A third shortcoming in the recreative activities of country

²¹ H. S. Curtis, *Education Through Play*, pp. 181-185.

people may be paradoxically described as inactivity. There is too much just sitting, visiting, feasting, looking, riding, or listening. There is lack of positive activity and participation in real play. This, to be sure, is one of the growing habits of our entire civilization, but that does not alter its significance or lessen its consequences for country people. The traditional toilsomeness and isolation of agriculture are doubtless partially responsible, but the lack of true play habits and the knowledge of how to play or what to play is chiefly to blame.

Until partially checked by the depression, the drift was definitely in the direction of catered, commercialized, and passive recreation rather than toward the more desirable opposite type. There was increased mobility, but that should not be mistaken for increased activity in the recreation chosen. Amusement was more sought after than true play.

Improving Rural Recreation

It is one thing to show the inadequacy of rural recreation, but quite another to offer a program of reform. All depends upon what forces are available and what measures are feasible. Some of these have already been suggested.

Among adults, the Grange, the Farmers' Association, the Farmers' Union, the Parent-Teacher Association, the Farmers' Club, the Farm Women's Club, the Farm Bureau, the Agricultural Extension Service and local Coöperative Associations are fostering more or less recreation in conjunction with other activities. Often it is only an incidental feature of the organization's program, but in other cases, as for instance with the Farm and Home Bureau in many places, and with the Grange, generally, it is a regular item. The Agricultural Extension Service also has adopted recreation as part of its regular program. Among other projects it has sponsored Homemakers' Camps for farm women in connection with the agricultural colleges in several states. In general, the Service promotes dramatics, song fests, dancing, family games, community pageants, and other recreative activities. In some instances, as in North Carolina, it has developed state-wide projects, involving the erection

of many clubhouses which sponsor recreation programs. With W.P.A. assistance around 200 have been built in the state since 1935.²²

In addition to the agencies working mainly with older adults, there are a number of national organizations that touch rural life and make some contribution to recreational activities among younger adults and juveniles. The Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., the Boy and Girl Scout Movement, and the Junior Red Cross are reaching limited areas. The United States Public Health Service, the Federal Children's Bureau, the National Recreation Association, and the 4-H Club work of the Agricultural Extension Service are all furthering play. The last two have joined to provide training for volunteer play leaders.

Some rural institutions also are actively promoting play. We have already referred to the consolidated schools and their influence in this direction. Educational institutions everywhere are awakening to the importance of play and the impulse is affecting country schools of every class. Less can be said of the church. With rare exceptions, it normally hinders the promotion of better play or any at all, apart from events held for money-raising purposes.

Thus, with the exception of economic resources, the means of realizing a better recreational life are becoming available simultaneously with the awakening of educational interests.

Tangible means of improving recreation upon which these various forces may well focus, are rural parks, playgrounds and community buildings. The goals were visualized by Dr. L. H. Bailey in the following: "Every community should have a permanent place set aside for recreational enterprises. This should be primarily a grove; and I suggest that if there is no grove in a community that is adaptable to such purposes, an area be planted definitely with this end in view. This grove should be provided with seats, picnic tables, and a speaking-stand. Somewhere in connection with it there should be a building, preferably one that would serve as a community hall. There should also be a regular playground, to be

²² Ola P. Malcolm, "Home Demonstration Moves Forward," *Extension Service Circular No. 303*, March, 1939.

as consciously set aside for play and for games as a town-hall is set aside for public business or a fair ground is set aside for fairs. . . .

"The time is coming when we must have in each large rural community an expert in recreation as we now have an expert in teaching, an expert in ministering, and as we shall soon have local experts in various phases of farming. These experts will organize what will be essentially experiment stations in social practice and social justice. They will introduce not only games and play, but also redirect the music, the drama, and many other public expressions in the open country."²³

Playgrounds and community buildings are probably within reach of most rural communities. Many have been built since 1910.²⁴ The W.P.A. has given a great impetus to the movement in a third of the states. Elsewhere, the interest has been fairly general.²⁵ Several bulletins on types of community buildings, and how to plan and secure them have been issued.²⁶ Such buildings are used for a variety of purposes besides recreation. But the latter is an important feature. The range of play activities runs as follows: entertainments, motion pictures, musicales, community sings, dances, local plays, table games, debates, spelling bees, annual celebrations, basketball, volley ball, billiards, indoor baseball, swimming and other gymnastic activities. Some buildings have playgrounds.

The Red River Farmers' Club Hall of Kittson County, Minnesota, may be cited as an instance of a modest effort. In this open country neighborhood was erected in 1917 a simple structure by voluntary subscriptions, donated labor, and funds raised at socials. The cost was only \$2,500. This hall has become a real recreation center. Dramatics, picnics, games and other play activities are carried on there.²⁷

²³ L. H. Bailey, "The Playground in Rural Communities," *The Playground*, Vol. V, No. 6.

²⁴ United States Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin No. 1274*, p. 2.

²⁵ Brunner and Lorge, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, Columbia University Press, 1937.

²⁶ The latest of these is "Community Buildings for Farm Families," United States Department of Agriculture, *Farmer's Bulletin No. 1804*, Sept., 1938, by Blanche Halbert.

²⁷ United States Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin No. 1274*, pp. 15-16.

Community parks and playgrounds, where the building is of secondary importance, also are being developed in a few places. In 1930 the National Recreation Association reported 73 communities of less than 2,500 that had provided public recreation grounds. A government bulletin describes one that will illustrate what can easily be done by an average community. Near Niagara, North Dakota, an open country neighborhood has provided itself with a park and playground known as "Bachelor Grove Community Park." It consists of eleven acres with pavilion, kitchen and refreshment parlor, baseball ground, wells, lighting system and many other improvements. The total cost was \$16,000 in money and labor. The money was raised by each family buying a share in the association. Here ball games, dances, picnics and other events are weekly occurrences in summer.²⁸

The play movement is reaching the small town more than the open country thru interested agencies. Some years ago the Harmon Foundation appropriated money for the purchase of playgrounds. It offered to furnish ten per cent of the cost of site up to certain limits. It required the grounds to be permanently dedicated to recreational use under control of the town council or board of education. The grounds were to be known as "Harmon Fields."

The recreation leader has appeared, not to be sure, quite as Dr. Bailey suggested, but in the persons of the county Agricultural Club and Home Demonstration agents, the 4-H Club leaders, and local volunteer workers. In at least two or three states legal provision is made for play directors. In New York it is permissible for school districts to have them, the state providing half the salary up to \$600. In Pennsylvania county and township supervisors are authorized to create a recreation board and provide funds for its use. Chester County was the first to set up such a board.²⁹ Thus a beginning has been made in raising up experts in play for the rural community, but the ideal is far from being realized.

In Denmark, and in Germany under the second Reich, an offi-

²⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, *Bulletin No. 1388*, "Rural Planning," pp. 2-5.

²⁹ *Progress Report*, Chapter IX, Albany, Sept., 1934.

cial called "Spiel Inspector" directed play in the country villages. If, thru the Extension Service or otherwise, all rural America could be provided with such leadership, it would prove a boon to rural society. The ideal might be an official who, like the county superintendent of schools, would circulate among the schools of an area to teach and organize play. Here is a fruitful field of experimentation for some philanthropist. If a subsidized director of recreation could once demonstrate the value and practicability of the scheme, it might open the way to a wider public interest in a support of play leaders.

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Topics for Discussion

1. From the tables in this chapter or from other sources note five kinds of leisure-time activities most preferred by farm youth and explain in each case why the preference.
2. Account for whatever differences there are in leisure-time activity between farm and village youth.
3. In rural communities with which you are familiar which of the following seem to hinder play activities the most, want of leadership, lack of facilities, opposing forces, indifference, or insufficient leisure?
4. Which is better for a rural community to depend upon, spontaneous leisure-time and play activities or programs of formally organized agencies?
5. What single agency or institution in the rural community with which you are most familiar is doing most to promote leisure-time activities? What are the main items in its program and do they appear to meet the needs or not?
6. To what extent are the leisure-time activities of your community being influenced by urban ideas and practices?

RURAL SANITATION AND HEALTH

The Chances of Death in Rural Society

“THE great problem of life—its labors and its affections—centers for most of us in the chances of death,” says Karl Pearson. For rural people in general, however, the great problem appears to be less centered in the chances of death than it is for urban dwellers. From 1900 until about 1920 the crude death rate in the original registration area of the United States averaged less in rural than in urban territory; then it rose slightly above the urban.¹ However, crude rates mean little. Mortality statistics do not properly distinguish rural from urban, since all aggregates under 10,000 are called rural. Nor do they take into account the differences between rural and urban populations in age, sex, and racial composition.

Adjusted rates are, therefore, more revealing. They show rural mortality rates to be well under urban. Thus, on the basis of the same age distribution, the rural rate was 13 and the urban 20.2 in 1910.

A far more accurate method of comparing rural and urban mortality is by the use of life expectation tables. Thus Thompson and Whelpton in comparing 14 large cities and 11 rural states found the expectation of life in 1919-20 to be 53.3 years in the former and 58.6 years in the latter. They concluded the more rural and agricultural the area is, the longer the expectation of life.² In 1930 the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's estimates of the life expectancy for the white population was: rural males, 62.09 years; females, 65.09; urban males, 56.73; females, 61.05.

¹ Walter F. Wilcox, *Introduction to the Vital Statistics of the United States: 1900-1930*, Washington, 1933, p. 25.

² W. S. Thompson and P. K. Whelpton, *Population Trends in the United States*, McGraw-Hill, 1933, pp. 241-242.

Thus it appears that a white male child born in the country today may expect to live some 5 years longer than one born in the city, and a white female child about 4 years longer. Altho in the generation since 1900 the mortality rate of cities has fallen more rapidly than that of the country, rural males subject to the conditions of a generation ago, had a longer life expectancy at all ages above 1 year than have urban males today. This simply means that in the last generation the urban population has advanced to the life expectancy level of the country a generation ago.³

It is apparently in the control of germ diseases that the city has advanced over the country while it has lost ground compared with the country with respect to degenerative diseases. Hence for the most important causes of death the rural rate is lower than the urban.⁴

If, therefore, the death rate may be taken as the measure of civilization, it would seem, on the face of things, that rural society has attained a higher level of civilization than has urban society.

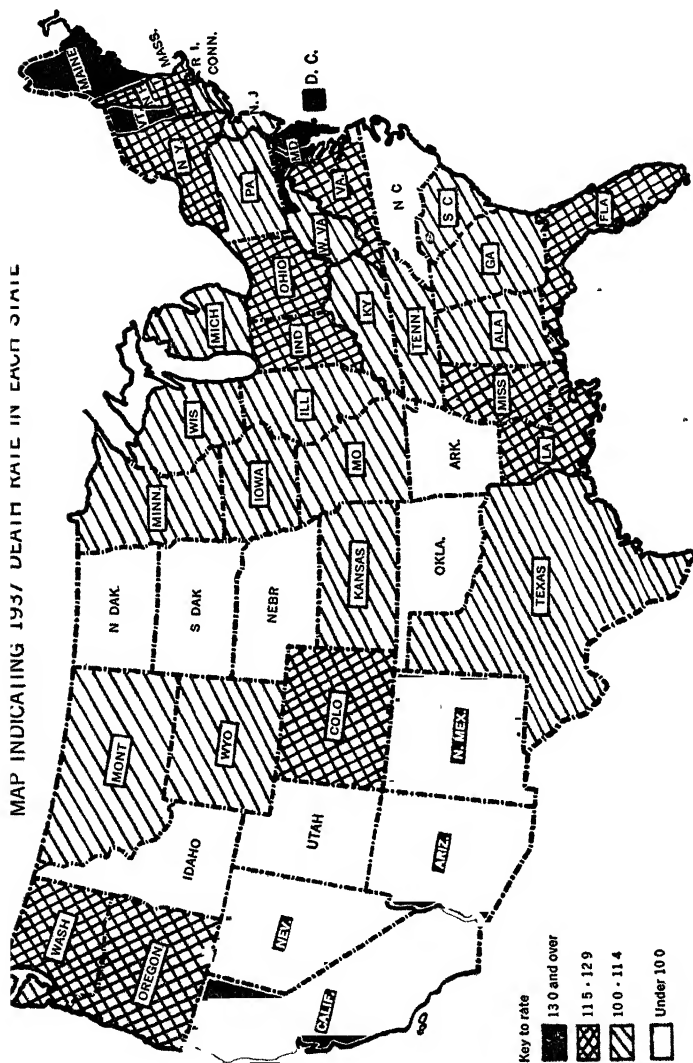
However, when considered in the light of other facts, such a conclusion is quite unwarranted. The chances of escaping death are on the average better in the country wholly thru *natural advantages*, not by virtue of a *higher level of civilization*. But even natural advantages are not present everywhere; hence the death rate is not uniformly lower in rural than in urban areas, as a glance at Figure 78 will show. There are favorable and unfavorable rural sections.

On the whole, however, natural advantages generally outweigh natural disadvantages and give the rural community a favorable status. For this it obviously deserves no credit, since its position is not due to social effort. In fact, it has made but little effort to improve its natural advantages. The city, in contrast, has exerted itself to overcome the disadvantages of its artificial life and has put the country to shame. Thus, insofar as health and sanitation are concerned, urban civilization is manifestly superior to anything the

³ Harold F. Dorn, "The Relative Amount of Ill-Health in Rural and Urban Communities," *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 53, July, 1938.

⁴ Thompson and Whelpton, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-257.

MAP INDICATING 1937 DEATH RATE IN EACH STATE



78. Showing Death Rate by States for 1937

Source: *Vital Statistics, Special Reports*, Bureau of the Census, Dec. 30, 1938.

country affords. For civilization must really be measured in terms of disadvantages overcome rather than of natural advantages enjoyed.

Neglected Rural Sanitation

Altho the truth is dawning that disease and death lurk primarily in our fellows and not in the physical environment, the fact cannot be ignored that it is quite as important to keep our physical surroundings wholesome, as it is to keep our neighbors free from disease. This is especially true of the country, for the countryman can perhaps avoid his sick neighbor, but he may not with such certainty avoid the flies, fleas, and mosquitoes that have visited his sick neighbor, nor the soil and the water that have been polluted by him. So while the countryman may escape the Scylla of exposure to sick people, he does it only to run more often into the Charybdis of a disease-infected environment, because of the common neglect of the latter in rural districts.

The most serious neglect pertains to the elimination of disease-causing and -carrying insects from which the country suffers. There is one variety of mosquito, the *culex quinque fasciatus*, which causes dengue or "break-bone fever." This mosquito is tropicopolitan in range and is responsible for extensive epidemics in the warmer parts of the United States. One such epidemic, for instance, raged thruout the Gulf States in the autumn of 1922. Altho dengue fever is rarely fatal, it causes intense suffering, contributes to the inefficiency of its victims, and perhaps to more or less permanent physical impairment. It can be eliminated only as this very common mosquito is destroyed.

Another variety of mosquito, the *anapheline*, is the chief carrier of malaria. There are upwards of 80,000,000 people in the malarious regions of the United States. From the rural districts of the South, where the incidence of the disease is highest, it shades off to relatively little in the North. In recent years, Mississippi, for instance, has reported about 80 cases of malaria per 1,000 of population. Probably there are at least 1,000,000 cases annually in the

country;⁵ some put it at 9,000,000 cases. Figure 79 shows the malaria area. It will also be seen from the map that many deaths occur. Data from the sections where the disease is most prevalent show mean death rates over a period of years ranging as high as 9 to 12 per 10,000 population.⁶

Like dengue fever, malaria can be eliminated by destroying the mosquito breeding places. Moreover, it can be controlled, if not eliminated, by the proper screening of houses.

Mention may be made in passing of the *Dermacentor* or spotted fever tick, another insect responsible for disease and death in the rural environment. When first identified, it was believed to be limited to the Northwest Rocky Mountain region, but in 1930 it was found along the Atlantic seaboard. It is now found in all geographic regions. It is harbored by various wild mammals and domestic animals, especially cattle. Its human host is reached from contact not only with animals, but also with underbrush. Before a prophylactic vaccine was developed, the mortality rate reached as high as 85 to 90 per cent.⁷

Everywhere rural districts are infested by flies. They flourish because of poor sanitary arrangements about farmsteads, especially where barnyard manure, on which they breed, is not properly cared for. Flies are great disease carriers, especially if human excreta are accessible to them, as is often the case, since adequate provisions for the disposal of such are frequently wanting. Hence typhoid fever, infantile diarrhea, and dysentery are prevalent in country districts. The seasonal incidence of these diseases corresponds to a considerable extent with fly prevalence in regions where filth disposal is neglected. Their rate of prevalence is always a good index to the sanitation of a community.

Some definite idea of how widespread and serious insanitary conditions are may be gained by reference to the findings of a survey of rural sanitation made in 1918 by the United States Public

⁵ Thomas Brues, *Insects and Human Welfare*, p. 9.

⁶ K. L. Maxcy, Reprint No. 815, from the *Public Health Reports*, pp. 233-250, Feb. 9, 1923.

⁷ Brock C. Hampton and Harry G. Eubank, "Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever," *Public Health Reports* Vol. 53, 1938, pp. 984-990.

Table 71

RURAL DEATHS FROM TYPHOID AND PARATYPHOID, PELLAGRA, AND
MALARIA, IN SEVEN SOUTHEASTERN COTTON STATES AND IN
OTHER STATES IN THE REGISTRATION AREA OF
THE UNITED STATES, 1930 ^a

State	1930 Rural Pop- ulation	TYPHOID AND PARATYPHOID		PELLAGRA		MALARIA	
		Deaths	Rate per 100,000	Deaths	Rate per 100,000	Deaths	Rate per 100,000
Seven cotton States .	12,404,000	1,578	12.9	3,126	25.2	2,050	16.5
Alabama	1,904,800	152	8.0	445	23.4	267	14.0
Arkansas	1,472,400	283	19.2	312	21.2	567	38.5
Georgia	2,241,000	424	18.9	514	22.9	406	18.1
Louisiana	1,271,000	157	12.4	121	9.5	131	10.3
Mississippi	1,776,400	220	12.4	473	26.6	312	17.6
North Carolina	2,369,600	123	5.2	739	31.2	42	1.8
South Carolina	1,368,800	239	17.5	522	38.1	325	23.7
Other States in the registration area	48,160,600	2,415	5.0	1,325	2.8	939	1.9

Source. *Mortality Statistics 1930*, U. S. Bureau of the Census, Tables Ia and 6.

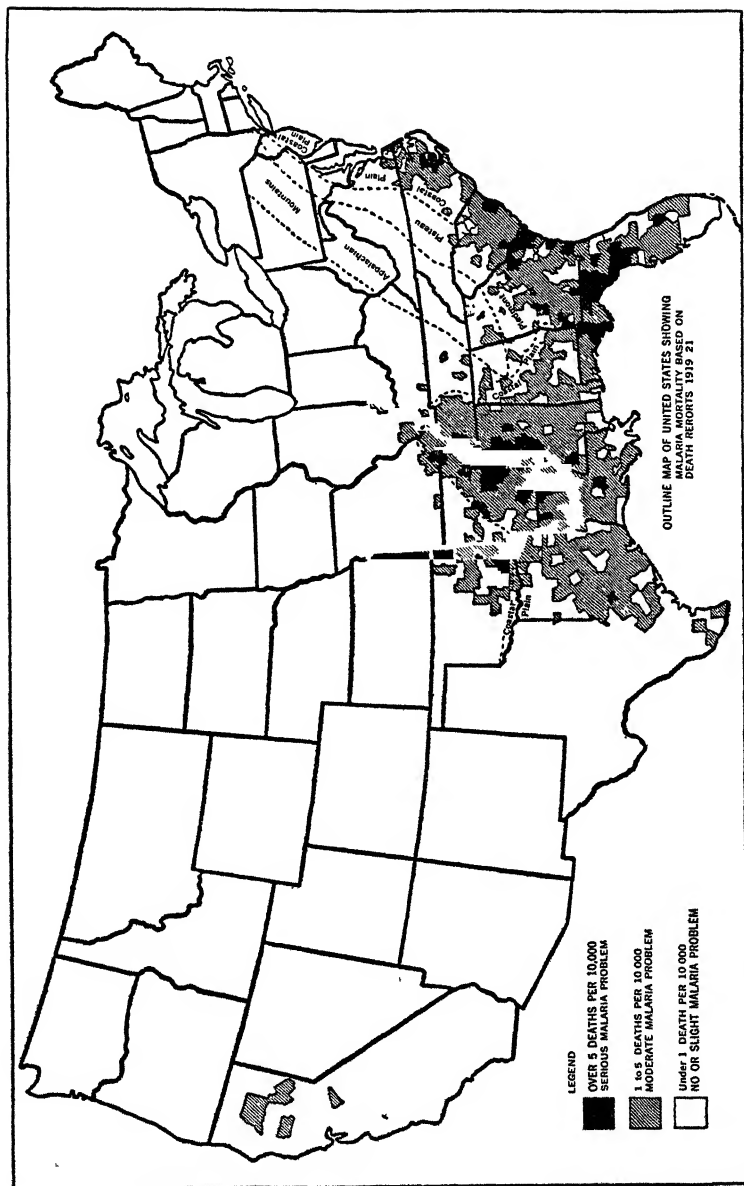
^a T. J. Wooster, Jr., "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," *W. P. A. Research Monograph V*, 1936, p. 230.

Health Service. A study of the conditions in fifteen typical rural counties of 13 Midwestern, Eastern, and Southern States brought out the following facts as summarized by L. L. Lumsden, surgeon of the Service:

Of 51,544 farm homes surveyed, only 1.22 per cent were equipped for the sanitary disposal of human excreta and at some which were properly equipped, the equipment was not used by all members of the household in a satisfactory manner; at 68 per cent, the water supply used for drinking and culinary purposes was obviously exposed to potentially dangerous contamination from privy contents or from promiscuous deposits of human excreta and at the majority of them the water supply was exposed also to unwholesome pollution from stable yards and pigsties. At only 32.88 per cent of the farm homes were the dwellings during the summer season effectively screened to prevent flies—having free access to nearby deposits of human or other filth—from entering the dining-rooms and kitchens and contaminating the foods for human consumption exposed therein.⁸

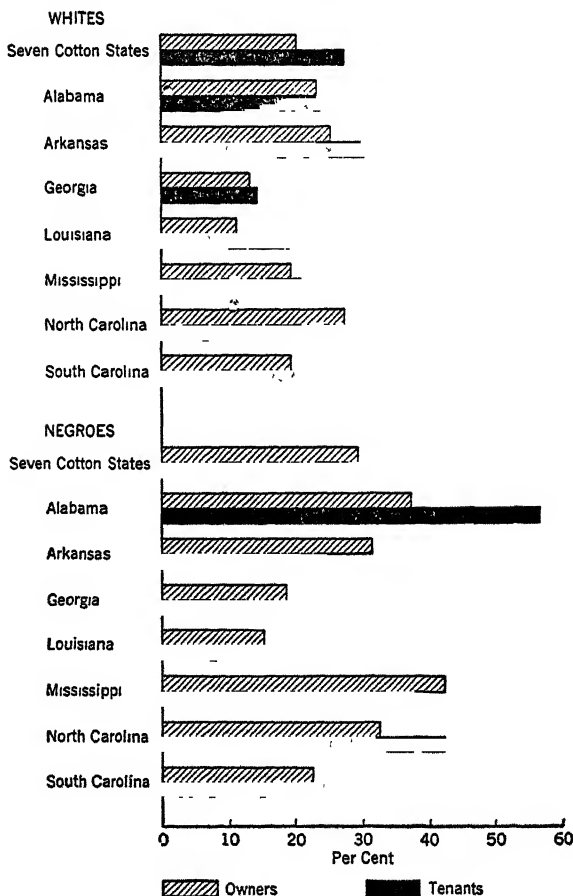
Since this study was made, there has been improvement in many areas, but the findings still hold true for a considerable part of

⁸ L. L. Lumsden, "Rural Sanitation," *Public Health Bulletin No. 94*, p. 40.



79. Distribution of Malaria in the United States

Source: Kenneth L. Maxcy's "Distribution of Malaria in the United States as Indicated by Mortality Reports," Reprint No. 839, *Public Health Reports*, May 25, 1923.



80. Percentage of Farm Houses in Southeastern Cotton States without Sanitary Facilities, 1934

Source: T. J. Woofert, Jr., "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," *W.P.A. Research Monograph V*, 1936, p. 99.

rural America, as subsequent surveys continue to reveal.⁹ For instance, it will be seen from Figure 80 that in 1934 about $\frac{1}{4}$ of all

⁹ See J. O. Dean and Kay Pearson, "Rural Sanitation by Emergency Relief Workers," *Public Health Reports Vol. 52*, Part I, 1937, pp. 629-636; see also *Farm Housing Survey* by Bureau of Home Economics U.S.D.A. in cooperation with Civil Works Administration.

the houses of white farmers and about $\frac{1}{3}$ of those of Negroes in the Eastern Cotton states lacked all sanitary facilities.

Altho typhoid, dysentery and diarrhea are the chief menace from insanitary conditions insofar as the fly is concerned, it does not end there; for the fly is known to transmit at least eighteen different kinds of disease germs. In addition to those mentioned, it carries the germs of scarlet fever, tuberculosis, cholera, tetanus, eye contagions, anthrax, glanders, infantile paralysis, meningitis, erysipelas, and several others.

Insanitary conditions are responsible for the hookworm disease also. Like malaria, it is almost wholly rural in origin. Some 20,000,000 people live in the infected areas of the South. Surveys in counties of Georgia, the Carolinas and Mississippi have revealed from 15.5 to 94.8 per cent of infection in the population 6 to 18 years of age.¹⁰ There are probably at least 2,000,000 cases of it annually. It lowers the vitality of its victims till they fall easy prey to other diseases, such as tuberculosis. Soil pollution from human excreta is the important factor in the spread of hookworm infection. It is preventable if proper sanitation is maintained.

Neglected Rural Sanitation an Urban Menace

Insanitary rural conditions affect not only country dwellers but urban people as well. To an increasing degree our urban communities are keeping themselves clean and by the most effective sanitary measures are seeking to protect themselves from health menaces within. But without, in far distant farmsteads, there lurk dangers against which the city gates are often unable to prevail. For flies and mosquitoes, milk, water, vegetables, fruits, and persons from insanitary areas are likely to pass the city portals daily. Any of these may be vehicles of infection. It is not, therefore, very far-fetched to say that probably the rate of urban morbidity and death would be even lower than it is, if rural sanitation were not so bad.

Not infrequently outbreaks of typhoid fever in urban districts

¹⁰ J. A. Ferrell, Director for the United States International Health Board, "The Trend of Preventive Medicine in the United States," p. 24. Reprint from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Sept. 20, 1923, Vol. 81.

are traced directly to contaminated milk or water supplied from the country. It is not so easy to trace epidemics of this sort to contaminated fruits and vegetables, but vegetables that have been grown in soil polluted by human waste are common disseminators of such diseases. The Survey of Rural Sanitation in fifteen counties brought to light that milk, fruit, vegetables and other foods were being sold to urban communities from farmsteads in the counties where from 11 to 69 per cent of the homes had no toilets whatever. From 5 to 12 per cent of the farm homes were engaged in such sale of food. Thus there was every chance that filth diseases would be carried to the urban consumer.¹¹

Nor does the menace end with commerce in foodstuffs. People carry disease with them. The countryman scatters infection in the town, and the townsman on vacation in the country returning home also brings it.

Causes of Neglected Rural Sanitation

1. The *individualistic mode of farm life* is the first causative factor in the problem of rural sanitation. Each farmstead is to all intents and purposes an isolated unit, providing its own water supply and disposing of its own sewage, practicing cleanliness or wallowing in filth as it sees fit. It creates and maintains conditions, in consequence, that may affect not only itself but the neighborhood as well, without thought for or interference from the neighbors. The primary difficulty, obviously, is lack of community interest or coöperation for the general welfare. Moreover, there is rarely any governmental agency that presumes to suggest or dictate to the farmer how he shall protect himself and his neighbors by sanitary living.

2. A second cause is *ignorance* of the nature of disease and its dissemination and of the methods of protection against it. As one has put it, "the farmer's knowledge of health is largely negative. If he or a member of his family falls ill he will call a doctor and do everything in his power to effect a cure. It has not occurred to him that the shallow, unprotected well, or the open spring or river

¹¹ See *op. cit.*, pp. 106, 128, 144, 156, 209, 229, 265.

from which he gets his drinking water may be the cause of his illness. As a rule he sees no danger in the open privy—in many instances having no privy of any kind, or in the lack of screens on doors and windows. A fly is simply a nuisance at meal time, or it may disturb his rest if perchance he takes a nap at the noon hour while the horses feed. Kinds, amounts and varieties of food are little thought of as having any bearing on health. The importance of milk in the diet of children is not understood and its absence has no particular significance to the rural parent.”¹² Often there is not only lack of information, but positive misinformation and superstition on health questions. The poor and prosperous alike are involved. In the Public Health Survey already referred to, one of the fifteen counties was canvassed as to the cause of typhoid fever. The answer given by three-fourths of the heads of the households where cases existed was that they didn’t know. Only one knew it was germs. In a similar inquiry of over 2,500 heads of households where there had been no recent cases, 38 per cent didn’t know the cause; about 23 per cent said “water”; about 12½ per cent said “dirt”; 10 per cent, “germs”; 4 per cent, “flies”; twelve persons, “excreta”; a similar number, “bad privy or cesspool.” Other groups gave as the cause “chills,” “green fruit,” “mosquitoes,” “milk,” “stomach troubles,” “marshes,” “fate,” “hot sun,” “exposure to bad weather,” and “heredity.” In addition some forty to fifty other causes were assigned by nearly as many different individuals. These ranged from “nursing typhoid,” thru “watermelons,” “worry,” “weeds,” “bad smells,” “oysters,” “frogs,” “crabs,” “rats,” to “going to church,” “tearing down old houses” and “mental suggestion.”¹³

The kinds of answers cited with reference to typhoid fever reveal, I suppose, the rural state of mind concerning the cause of many diseases.

3. A third factor is *diffusiveness*. Cities and towns have populations massed on small areas. The physical difficulties in providing

¹² Edward N. Clopper, *Rural Child Welfare*, p. 25. Copyright by The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1922. Used by permission.

¹³ *Rural Sanitation*, p. 41.

a common water supply, sewage systems, street cleaning, and garbage disposal are, therefore, relatively simple. In contrast, widely scattered farmsteads with so few people on extensive areas present tremendous difficulties in providing such facilities.

This diffusiveness is not only physical; it is also mental and governmental. Mass action, as suggested under the first factor mentioned, is not easy in a scattered population. No such stimuli prompt it as with large numbers of people living in a congested district. Moreover, government in the open country has not customarily concerned itself with problems of health and sanitation. There is no machinery, such as municipalities have, for mobilizing neighborhoods in common undertakings.

4. *Expense* is another barrier to adequate sanitation in the country, whether viewed as an individual or as a community undertaking. In those sections where the need is greatest there are large numbers of poor tenants and croppers who own no homes and who move frequently from one place to another. They are unable to provide decent surroundings for themselves, and the landlords do not see any necessity for doing it nor any gain to be derived from the outlay required.

Where the farm operator is also the owner, too often the cost of making his surroundings reasonably sanitary may be greater than his economic status will justify, even tho the cost is not high. If, however, a clean barnyard, a pure water supply, a safe disposal of human waste and house sewage, and adequate screening are to be provided by many farms, a relatively large outlay will often be involved. Even when these can be afforded, problems of drainage which the individual farmer cannot handle will often remain.

From a community standpoint, even if sewer and water systems were generally feasible for country neighborhoods, the amount of taxable property and income in the average district is too small to bear the cost. Such provisions for health protection as the city enjoys can be had, if at all, only at incomparably greater cost by the country, and the latter is less able to bear it.

Withal rural sanitation is recognized as one of the most difficult

as well as most important problems confronting the rural community and the nation.¹⁴

Means of Improving Sanitation and Health

The immediate attack must be thru education. The country people must be made acquainted with the sources of disease, how it is transmitted and how it may be curbed. They must be taught the importance of prevention rather than cure and to that end be persuaded to tax themselves, that the necessary protection may be secured. Any effort that will accomplish results on a wide scale must meet and break down superstition, resistance to innovation, and often positive opposition, especially by local physicians who profit by curing the sick. Both juvenile and adult education are involved, the one chiefly thru the schools and the other in the demonstration to the farmer of just what may be accomplished.

The demonstration method has done much in improving agricultural production, controlling plant and animal pests and diseases, and is equally effective when applied to health and sanitation. This method has been adopted by the United States Public Health Service in coöperation with state and local health organizations.

A Sanitary Commission set up in the Southern States by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1908 was the first organized effort in the interest of rural health in America. Its work led to the organization in 1911 of the first county health unit under the U. S. Public Health Service.

This service makes a county-wide sanitary and health survey, maps the findings, and conducts a campaign of education. The following is a typical instance of a program carried out in a Mississippi county:

1. An accurate health Survey of every home in the county. In making this canvass a trained worker visited each home and took the name and age of each member of the family. A record was made of all important diseases which had occurred in the family

¹⁴ *Op cit.*, p. 8.

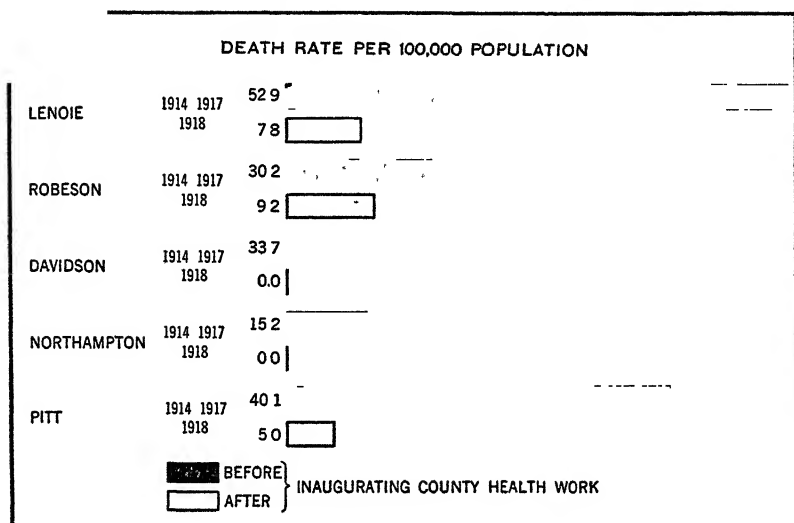
within the preceding five years. A careful note was also made of the sanitary conditions of the home. The purpose of the work was fully explained to the family and they were told of the seriousness of the soil-pollution disease. Instructive bulletins on infant care, typhoid fever, hookworm disease, pellagra, tuberculosis, and rural sanitation were left in the home.

2. Examination and treatment of all persons for hookworm disease.
3. Medical inspection of all school children.
4. Giving typhoid vaccine to all.
5. Instructing in infant welfare work.
6. Making a health map of the county.
7. Putting on a health educational campaign.
8. Dairy inspection.
9. Hotel, meat market, barber shop, soda fountain and grocery store inspection.

The effects of work of this sort have been notable. In the following graphs a few illustrations may be seen.

The rural efforts of the U. S. Public Health Service focus on the promotion of a full-time County Health Service. Such organizations have proved to be the best means of accomplishing the primary aim of the work. A full-time county health organization should consist of a medical officer, a clerk, technician or bacteriologist, one or more public health nurses, and, if necessary, a sanitary inspector, all giving full time. Generally the staff is not so complete as this, including only a medical officer, a nurse and an office clerk. The program involves making personal contacts with the homes and promoting health education. At the outset every effort is made to emphasize the outstanding problems of each county. By this means it is sought to awaken interest and secure support that will make the work permanent. Thus in many Southern counties the filth-borne diseases—hookworm, typhoid fever, diarrhea, dysentery—are given first attention. In others malaria control is stressed. Elsewhere it may be tuberculosis, infant welfare, venereal disease, and maternity.¹⁵

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.



81. Reduction of Death Rate from Typhoid Fever under Control Methods in Five North Carolina Counties

Source: Ferrell, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Rural Health Organizations

A rural area of considerable extent is necessary to sustain an effective health organization. The county has therefore been taken as the best unit.

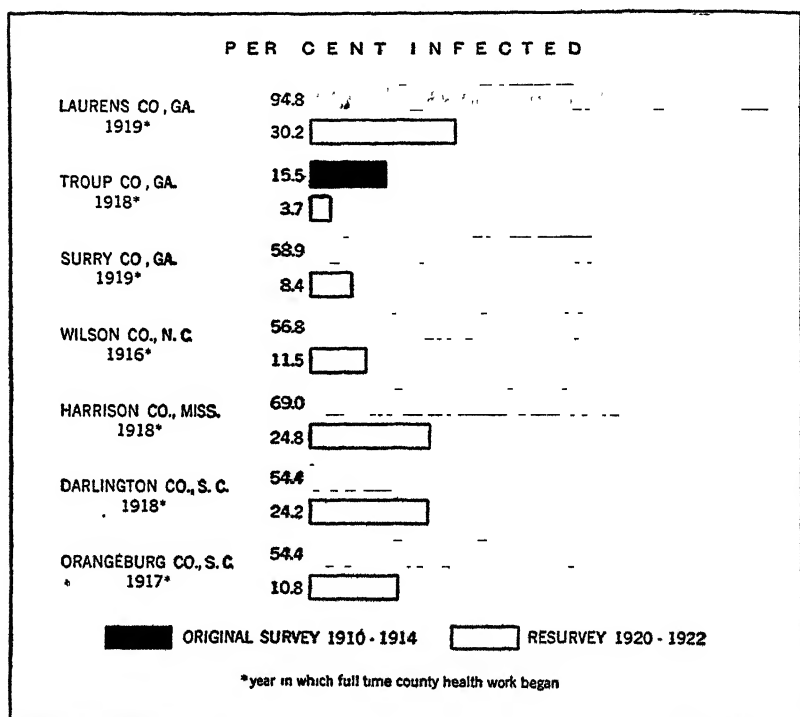
The Public Health Service allots to a county a sum, which must be duplicated from state and local or private sources. A qualified director of public health work acceptable to the local and state health boards is then appointed and the organization already described is set up.

Full-time county health service was first initiated in Guilford County, North Carolina, in 1911. Since then a gradual expansion of this service has taken place until by 1937, there were 946 counties under it. Figures 84 and 85 show the distribution of this service and the percentage of the rural population reached by it.

The 946 counties include 41.7 per cent of the rural population, but the majority of rural counties, or some 1,554, were at this date

without any such service.¹⁶ Probably less than fifty of the rural counties have health service on a par with that found in the most progressive cities.

It will be observed that only six states have complete service. Obviously, to extend it to all the states will be a large undertaking.



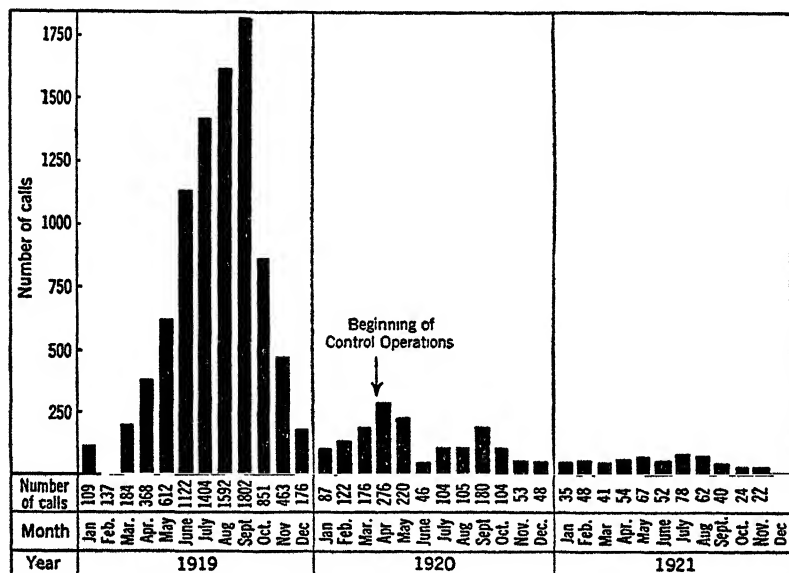
82. Reduction in Hookworm in Southern Counties under Control Measures

Source: Ferrell, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

Prior to 1935, federal appropriations for this purpose were irregular and meager, ranging from nothing to a maximum of \$347,000, reached in 1929. Only about 1 per cent of the budget of the Public Health Service went for rural sanitation. Local governments generally were indifferent to health needs. The *Reports of*

¹⁶ *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 52, 1937, p. 1664.

the Public Health Service emphasized the fact that without moral support and financial aid from other sources the local governments had no disposition to appropriate adequate funds for the support of efficient service.¹⁷ The federal funds serve primarily to encourage and stimulate local appropriations. The chief support of 91 per cent



83. Reduction in Physicians' Calls for Malaria in Two Texas Towns Due to Control Operations

Source: *The Survey*, Aug. 15, 1922, p. 626.

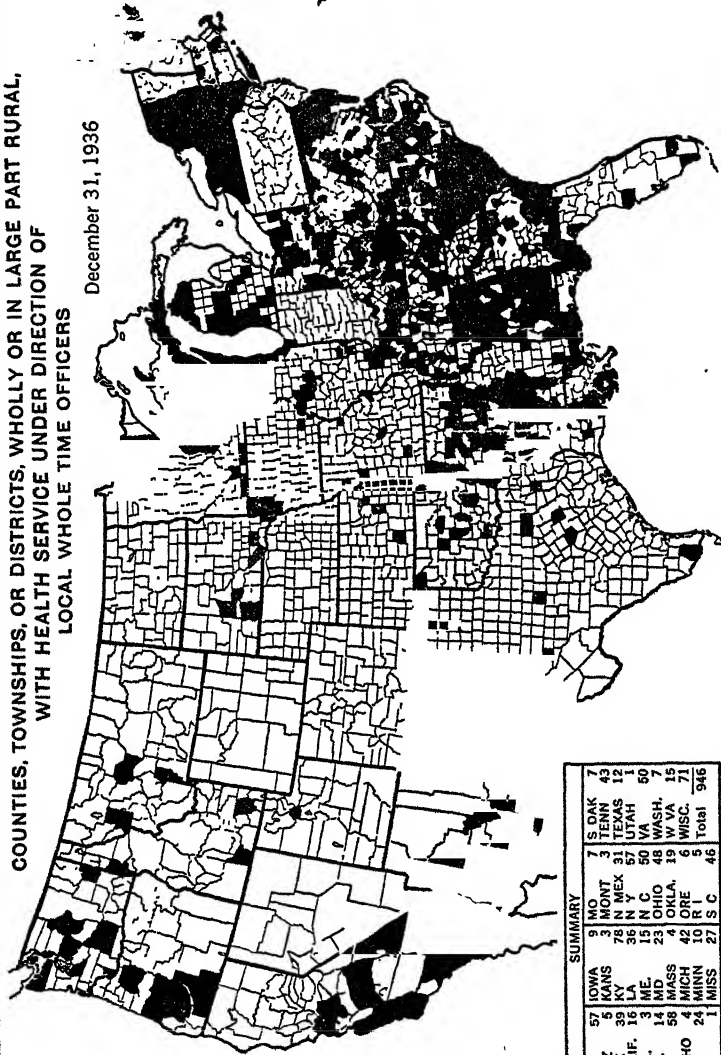
of the local units was, in addition to the U. S. Public Health Service, the State Board of Health, the Rockefeller Foundation, Rosenwald Fund, Commonwealth Fund, Couzens Fund, and the Woman's Hospital Fund.

All agencies combined spent about \$5,000,000 annually on rural health and sanitation whereas it would have required \$20,000,000 on a 45 cents per capita basis to have served all rural counties. But the Milbank Fund demonstration in Cattaraugus County, New

¹⁷ *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 19, p. 1078, U. S. Public Health Service.

COUNTIES, TOWNSHIPS, OR DISTRICTS, WHOLLY OR IN LARGE PART RURAL,
WITH HEALTH SERVICE UNDER DIRECTION OF
LOCAL WHOLE TIME OFFICERS

December 31, 1936



SUMMARY			
ALA	57	IOWA	9
ARIZ	5	KANS	3
ARK	39	LA	36
CALIF.	16	NEB	23
DEL	12	ND	14
GA	58	MASS	4
IDAHO	4	MICH	42
ILL	24	MINN	10
	1	MISS	27
		S C	46
		MO	7
		MONT	3
		N MEX	31
		N C	50
		OKLA	48
		ORE	19
		PA	6
		TEXAS	50
		UTAH	50
		VA	50
		WASH.	7
		W VA	15
		WISC.	71
		Total	946

84. Rural Areas with Fulltime Public Health Service, December 31, 1936

Rural areas (in black) having whole-time health service, December 31, 1936

STATE	COUNTIES UNDER FULL TIME ADMINISTRATION				%	PERCENTAGE OF RURAL POPULATION SERVED AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1936										
	JAN. 1		DEC. 31			10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	
	1933	1934	1935	1936												
1 DELAWARE	3	3	3	3	100.0											
2 MARYLAND	22	23	23	23	100.0											
3 NEW MEXICO	6	6	31	31	100.0											
4 NEW YORK	5	5	5	57	100.0											
5 SO. CAROLINA	23	23	23	46	100.0											
6 WISCONSIN	0	0	0	71	100.0											
7 ALABAMA	46	50	56	57	88.5											
8 MAINE	5	5	2	15	86.1											
9 RHODE ISLAND	0	0	0	5	74.0											
10 KENTUCKY	73	70	75	78	69.9											
11 LOUISIANA	31	32	34	36	63.6											
12 NO. CAROLINA	36	41	53	50	62.6											
13 ARIZONA	4	4	4	5	61.8											
14 VIRGINIA	16	17	40	50	61.8											
15 OHIO	40	39	40	48	61.4											
16 ARKANSAS	21	19	19	39	59.4											
17 CALIFORNIA	13	15	16	16	57.2											
18 TENNESSEE	34	39	36	43	55.4											
19 MICHIGAN	30	33	39	42	47.1											
20 WEST VIRGINIA	13	13	14	15	43.6											
21 MISSISSIPPI	24	25	25	27	43.2											
22 WASHINGTON	8	8	8	7	38.8											
23 GEORGIA	30	30	31	58	38.4											
24 OREGON	6	7	6	6	36.8											
25 OKLAHOMA	0	1	2	19	26.4											
26 FLORIDA	2	2	3	14	25.1											
27 ILLINOIS	1	1	0	24	24.0											
28 MISSOURI	9	8	6	7	18.5											
29 IDAHO	0	0	0	4	18.4											
30 MASSACHUSETTS	3	3	3	4	14.4											
31 MINNESOTA	1	1	1	10	14.4											
32 SO. DAKOTA	1	0	0	7	10.4											
33 IOWA	1	1	1	9	9.9											
34 MONTANA	4	4	3	3	8.0											
35 TEXAS	8	7	9	12	7.9											
36 KANSAS	4	3	3	3	5.7											
37 UTAH	2	2	1	1	4.6											
38 INDIANA	0	0	0	1	1.6											
39 PENNSYLVANIA	3	0	0	0	0.0											
40 CONNECTICUT	2	2	0	0	0.0											
41 COLORADO	0	0	0	0	0.0											
42 NEBRASKA	0	0	0	0	0.0											
43 NEVADA	0	0	0	0	0.0											
44 NEW HAMPSHIRE	0	0	0	0	0.0											
45 NEW JERSEY	0	0	0	0	0.0											
46 NO. DAKOTA	0	0	0	0	0.0											
47 VERMONT	0	0	0	0	0.0											
48 WYOMING	0	0	0	0	0.0											
TOTALS	530	542	615	946	41.7											

85. Percentage of the Rural Population under Fulltime Public Health Service, December 31, 1936

Number of whole-time county or local district health units, by States, 1933-36, and percentage of rural population served on December 31, 1936. Source: *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 51, p. 1133.

York, showed that \$2 per capita was necessary for a really effective service, hence rural America should have \$100,000,000 annually.

The Social Security Act of 1935 provided a budget of \$10,000,000 annually for the Public Health Service. Of this \$2,000,000 are allocated to research, and \$8,000,000 are distributed to the states on the basis of population, needs, or special health problems. Since it is the rural areas that have the greatest problems, the bulk of these funds will tend to go for the development and maintenance of county health service. While this is a notable step forward, it does not solve the problem.

Curiously enough, no support for an effective public health program is forthcoming from the American Medical Association. Everywhere it fights Federal Aid to local health units and works against them when they are established. However, this opposition of vested interests will probably be overcome long before the ignorance, indifference, and poverty of the rural community disappear.

It is estimated that preventable illness costs rural America from one to ten billions of dollars annually. If an outlay of \$20,000,000 would save one billion, as it seems reasonable to think, there would accrue a net saving of \$980,000,000 to the rural public.¹⁸ Only as the nation comes to realize that it may be quite as profitable to safeguard health as it is to protect live stock and crops from disease and pests and to build defenses against possible enemies, will adequate health service be secured.

The Rural Hospital and Medical Aid

There is a lack of physicians in the country districts. Perhaps not over 12 per cent of the rural population are adequately supplied. In the more isolated sections there are often no physicians at all.

For a generation the ratio of physicians to population in rural territory has been declining. In 1929 rural territory had 48 per cent of the population and but 31 per cent of the physicians of the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

nation, while cities of 100,000 and over had 30 per cent of the population and 44 per cent of the physicians. In 1929 there were 126 physicians per 100,000 of the nation's population, but the inequality of their distribution is seen in the fact that there were 78 per 100,000 population in all communities of 5,000 or less and 185 per 100,000 in all places of 100,000 and over.¹⁹

For example, in the state of Ohio in 1931 there was in urban areas one physician to 618 of the population, whereas in rural areas there was only one to 1,572 of the population.²⁰ In a number of states where 70 to 85 per cent of the people live in the country, only one doctor will be found for every 1,000 to 1,500 persons.

The decrease of physicians in rural areas was fully disclosed in Pusey's survey in 1925 and Leland's in 1931.²¹ The reports indicate that the percentage of physicians in small country towns dropped from 29.5 per cent in 1906 to 13.4 in 1931.

Altho the dearth of physicians in much rural territory is serious, a considerable part of the country population is in reach of urban centers where medical service is available. This increasing town-centering of rural life in consequence of the telephone and automobile tends in a measure to offset the shortage of resident rural physicians.²²

The cause of this decline of rural medical service is assigned by Dr. Pusey, first, to the high cost of medical education, which country boys cannot afford; second, to the cultural disadvantages of rural life, which has nothing to offer the type of doctor that is now being educated, described as "the country club type"; and third, to the reduction in the number of medical schools *pari passu* with the increasing cost of education.

¹⁹ I. S. Falk, C. R. Rorem, and M. D. Ring, *The Cost of Medical Care*, University of Chicago Press, 1933, pp. 197-198.

²⁰ C. E. Lively, "Some Rural Social Agencies in Ohio, A Study of Trends, 1921-1931," Ohio Agricultural Exp. Station Bulletin No. 529, Sept., 1933, p. 19.

²¹ See *The Distribution of Physicians in the United States*, General Education Board 1924; W. A. Pusey, *Medical Education and Medical Service, Some Further Facts and Considerations*; Chicago American Medical Association, 1926, and *Medical Education and Medical Service*, 1925, by same author, R. G. Leland, *Distribution of Physicians in the United States*, Chicago, American Medical Association, 1935.

²² I. S. Falk, C. R. Rorem, and M. C. Ring, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

There are additional factors, also. One is the lure of specialization for the rising generation of doctors. The country does not call for specialists; it needs general practitioners. Hence an inadequate supply of doctors in rural districts. Another is the relatively unremunerative practice of the country—unremunerative because the country people cannot pay such charges as the city population does. Still another is the hardship that the country doctor must endure in the pursuit of his calling—long rides, exposure to all kinds of weather, poor facilities for handling his cases, lack of aid from other expert physicians, and the absence of sources of professional stimulation such as cities afford. There are, to be sure, certain developments that are tending to make the country a more inviting field than hitherto. Good roads, motor travel, and telephones are making conditions easier. But they do not offset the social and economic drawbacks.

In 65 or more rural communities in the Province of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Canada, physicians are hired out of tax money on a yearly salary to furnish medical service. One doctor serves about 3,000 people at an annual cost of from \$7.50 to \$11.50 for each family. Here socialized medicine is developing with significant results in a declining death and morbidity rate. Those who are coöperating to provide themselves with this service are reported to be thoroly satisfied with the results. Moreover, the cost per family averaged only one-third of the amount spent on illness by the average rural family in the United States. According to the Committee on the Cost of Medical Care, this was \$33.80.²³

So far, coöperative or socialized projects for medical service have made only a beginning in rural America. There are a few instances of voluntary farmers' health associations, Mount Airy, North Carolina, being a case in point. There protection is secured for \$15 per family per year. Tax supported medical service for all the people of a community comparable to that in Canada is almost unknown. Indian Lake in the Adirondack Mountains of New York furnishes an instance of this type. A tax provides its only doctor a

²³ W. W. Wheeler, "Where Doctors Send No Bills," *The Reader's Digest*, July, 1935, pp. 75-77.

salary of \$3,000 per year and a dentist \$2,000 per year to take care of the teeth of all the children.²⁴

The most interesting development of rural medical service is being fostered by the Farm Security Administration. In twenty states, half of them in the South and the rest in the Middle West and West, some 78,000 low-income farm families are being provided with medical care at a cost of \$20 to \$30 per family per year thru coöperative medical associations. Money to organize them is loaned by the government. In 1939 there were 228 in operation. Thus all the medical needs of the member families are met without unduly burdening anyone. The doctors are paid on a pro rata basis. The scheme is a form of voluntary health insurance for the clients and a protection against unreasonable hardship for the doctor.²⁵ It is an experiment having great possibilities.

There is a dearth of hospitals as well as physicians in rural areas. In 1934 hospitals were found in 1,779 counties, while nearly 1,300 counties had none. In some cases the people living in counties without hospitals had access to those of an adjacent county, but for the most part no such facilities were within reach. In the South conditions were the worst.²⁶ If two beds per 1,000 population in a radius of 50 miles from the hospitals were allowed, 22,000 new hospitals were called for to supply the needs of the entire country in 1934.²⁷ Even that would not provide adequate service, which, it is estimated, requires one hospital bed for each 150 persons.

Iowa legalized taxation for and built the first rural hospital in 1909. Since that date similar enabling legislation has been passed by most states and a number of hospitals have been built. Private philanthropy has frequently helped provide them. However, the agricultural depression and other factors, such as the rising cost of building and equipment, opposition to more taxes, and jealousy

²⁴ Carroll P. Streeter, "Reorganizing Rural Health Facilities," *Proceedings Eighteenth Country Life Conference*, University of Chicago Press, 1936, pp. 47-59.

²⁵ R. C. Williams, "Medical Care Plans for Low-Income Farm Families," *The Health Officer*, Vol. 3, January, 1939, pp. 245-249, U. S. Public Health Service.

²⁶ Blanche Halbert, "Hospitals for Rural Communities," *Farmers' Bulletin No. 1792*, U.S.D.A., November, 1937, p. 3.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

among local physicians, have intervened practically to stop the movement. At the same time, the rapid extension of motor transportation and improved highways have served to bring more country people within easy reach of city hospitals and so to lessen somewhat the pressure for local ones. Larger hospital areas than the county also are becoming possible. However, the limit seems to be a district with a radius of 50 miles.²⁸

Since 1930, the American Hospital Association reports, hospitals, mostly rural, have been closed at the rate of 100 a year, while others have struggled to exist. Many have been poorly equipped and managed institutions of little value to the communities in which they are located.²⁹ The tradition of home nursing, together with suspicion of hospital service, has worked against them.

The country doubtless pays a high price for the lack of hospitals, especially in deaths from childbirth and in infant mortality. Ever since 1929 in the Birth Registration Areas the death rate of infants under one year has been higher in rural territory than in urban districts. From 20 to 30 per cent of the confinements, largely rural, are estimated to be without medical attention, to say nothing of the absence of such facilities as only hospitals afford. However, the maternal death rate of the country is about that of the cities.³⁰

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²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁹ Carroll P. Streeter, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

³⁰ H. F. Dorn, "Maternal Mortality in Rural and Urban Areas," *Public Health Reports* Vol. 54, April 28, 1939, No. 17, pp. 684-690.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Since the death rate is generally considered the measure of civilization and since this rate is normally lower in the open country than in urban areas, why may we not say that American rural civilization is higher than urban?

2. What are the public health functions performed by each of the three units of government, federal, state and local?

3. Discuss pro and con the question of medical coöperatives for American rural communities.

4. Would universal full-time public health service for the rural population solve the health problem of the country?

5. Are unfavorable rural health conditions due more to the lack of medical and health service or to the ignorance of the population concerning sanitation and disease?

6. Which in general has the better balanced diet, country or city folks?

7. Which would be the more effective methods of introducing sanitary measures, such as complete house screening against flies and mosquitoes, in a community where such measures were not in use—to get a law passed requiring it, or to induce a few families to try it on the assumption that their example would be generally imitated?

Part VI

SOCIO-CULTURAL PROCESSES

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL PROCESS IN RURAL- URBAN CIVILIZATION

MODERN civilization is a complex including both rural and urban culture. The interactions of these two phases constitute part of the social process; hence sociology, whether rural or urban, must concern itself with the goings-on in this field of inter-group relations. That indeed we have been doing in a more or less detailed fashion thruout this work, but it will be profitable to turn from the particular to the more general in order to get a better grasp of the whole. If we attempt a sketch of the main cultural developments of western civilization in modern times as they have appeared in rural-urban relations, the results may further the student's understanding of the subject.

Town and Country Culture Basically Different

Two fundamentally different modes of getting a living set the rural and urban worlds apart. The former may be characterized as the *extractive* means and the latter as the *creative*. Farming, lumbering, mining, and fishing are productive chiefly in a limited sense. In one way or another they produce merely by taking out of nature's storehouse what the earth is pleased to yield. Man's ingenuity in these pursuits is mainly exercised in husbanding, conserving, securing or appropriating the resources at hand rather than in bringing anything into being. He is primarily a caretaker, a manager; not a creator or maker. In contrast, those who follow the basic occupations of the urban world are largely given to creating things *de novo*. Urban production thus means to originate, to bring into being the hitherto non-existent. Man ceases to be a keeper and becomes an inventor. Art and science flourish at his hand, and an

almost endless succession of new forms, techniques, mechanisms, methods, systems, and ideas flows from the urban fountain.

These divergent pursuits have further significance in that they give rise to more or less contrasting general behavior modes in the people. The countryman, being essentially non-creative in his efforts to make a living, tends to become static in all other respects. With few exceptions his life moves in cycles almost as fixed as the seasons. So it transpires that agriculture has experienced relatively few changes thruout its long history, and the annals of its people have been uneventful. There has been, in fact, but little development in its essential features since the day of its origin and rarely anything that could be called a revolution. Altho its advent marked the beginning of civilization, for it placed man in a position of mastery over nature and destiny that made the gods tremble, it was and is and always will be a cultural stage of strictly limited possibilities. Nevertheless it was the first triumphant stage in man's cultural advancement. So long a time did it prevail that civilization and agriculture became not only synonymous but synchronous.

The activities of urban man have, on the other hand, given rise to very different consequences, for they have been highly stimulating and provocative to his mental life. There has been constant challenge to seek new conquests; hence urban history has been a record of endless achievement. The impulse to evolution and revolution present in its culture has enabled the city to acquire ever-increasing power and ascendancy. In brief, behavior has been dynamic. Eventually evolving the capitalistic-industrial system, we see urbanism superseding agriculture as the master of human destiny. Now it is urbanism that is synonymous with civilization, while agriculture stands outmoded and relegated to a marginal position along with the hunting and pastoral economies that preceded it.

The all important difference between urban and rural pursuits is, we emphasize, that one gives a static and the other a dynamic cultural complex. The dynamic, naturally enough, is the more powerful and aggressive; it inevitably tends to dominate and to shape the whole cultural life of the nation. How this has come about can be made clear by tracing somewhat in detail the interactions of

town and country society. Any effort of this sort will find us dealing with the social processes.

Urban Ascendancy

The ancient world saw the city attain supremacy. In Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome urbanism rose to power and long held sway. Then came a period of decadence thruout the great cultural areas, to be followed by the slow emergence of western European society under feudal organization. During the manorial era, which lasted for about a thousand years, agriculture was everywhere the chief pursuit and its cultural patterns prevailed almost universally. It might be said that at that time urban society was in its swaddling clothes thruout the west. The manor completely overshadowed it. However, town life was growing up and by the Thirteenth Century it had attained something of the stature of youthful maturity. The development and widening of markets during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries caused urban power to wax mighty and to claim cultural supremacy. Thus arrived modern urbanism, a period, to quote Spengler, "when the development of the city had reached such a point of power that it had no longer to defend itself against country and chivalry, but on the contrary had become a despotism against which the land and its basic order of society were fighting a hopeless defensive battle—in the spiritual domain against nationalism, in the political against democracy, in the economic against money."¹

Conflict was a conspicuous process in the rise of the city. The clash of rural and urban interests began to be heard in every western land. It involved many issues, took numerous forms, fluctuated in intensity and gave rise to various consequences before its course was run. The stakes were of divers sorts; such as political, economic, moral, religious, and educational. Armies, confederations, organizations, parties, parliaments, statutes, constitutions, ballots, fortunes, propaganda were among the instruments employed by the contending parties. When the cities first began to assert themselves,

¹ Oswald Spengler, *Decline of the West* (tr. Atkinson), Vol. II, p. 97.

it was to gain the rights and privileges which the manors monopolized and denied them. These were free markets, release from the oppressive obligations imposed by castle and cathedral, guarantees of untrammelled trade, opportunities for the pursuit of corporate life, liberty and happiness in their own way. The struggle was at the outstart that of the weak against the strong. Burgher met baron in an endeavor to wrest from unyielding hands whatsoever might be gained. On the continent both about the Mediterranean and about the Baltic, city joined with city in leagues and confederations to resist the feudal lords and to further the cause of municipal rights. In England, as one might expect from her traditional behavior, it was a lone-handed struggle, with each city fighting by and for itself and devil take the hindmost! There were no urban alliances nor confederations. Each town contended against its overlord and bishop as best it could, now gaining some ground, now losing it, in a prolonged fight which, however, eventuated in victory and power for the burghers.

The conflict had its roots, of course, in the domination and exploitation of the towns by the manors. Rarely indeed have rural and urban interests been related in any other fashion, whether conflict has become manifest or not. Since that early time, the position of country and city has been reversed, but under the European feudal system the country regularly dominated and exploited the towns. When, therefore, we hear the bitter complaints of countrymen in America today against the city for its corporate ruthlessness, its greedy wealth, its unfettered privileges, its political supremacy and economic dictatorship while everything rural languishes and decays, it is to hear nothing new. The age old processes of domination and exploitation are merely wringing cries and blood out of their victims as they have ever done; only now it is the country that suffers and wails whereas once it was the towns.

It will give perspective on the present if we note the state of English towns when the feudal lords held sway. The case of Winchester in 1450 well illustrates the situation. Its condition, as the burghers declared, "is become right desolate." The historian says:

"Nine hundred and ninety-seven houses stood empty and in seventeen parish churches there was no longer any service. A list is given of eleven streets 'that be fallen down in the city of Winchester within eighty years last passed'; and in each case an account is added of the number of householders that had formerly lived in the street, a hundred, a hundred and forty, or two hundred as the case might be, where there were now but two or three left. Since the last Parliament held there, eighty-one households had fallen. 'The desolation of the said poor city is so great, and yearly falling, for there is such a decay and unwinn that without gracious comfort of the King our sovereign lord, the mayor and the bailiffs must of necessity cease and deliver up the city and the keys into the King's hands.' " ²

Altho Winchester's plight was doubtless extreme and perhaps without parallel in England, its lot was nevertheless shared in a general way by all the towns. The "outbreaks of popular fury in which," says Green, "from time to time the irritation of the burghers found expression have often been represented as symptoms of a spirit of malice and misrule by which an ignorant mob was instigated to attack the most beneficent institution known to their society and with no justification save from their lawless temper, seek to appropriate to themselves its privileges and possessions. But the causes of the conflict were more valid and serious." ³ Baronial rule, lay and ecclesiastic, was responsible for their plight, and the "boroughs were forced as a mere matter of self-preservation into insistent and reiterated demands" that supreme control be relinquished by the feudal powers. "When the pole-axes and daggers with which they at first sought to enforce their convictions were laid aside, they turned to the law-courts and the paper wars of Westminster to seek a remedy for their grievances; and it is in the records of the trials from the middle of the Fifteenth Century to the Reformation in which the pleadings of both sides may be heard that we find the real justification of the burghers' claim to civic

² Mrs. J. R. Green, *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, Vol. I, pp. 326-327. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 330-331. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

supremacy, and of their determined assaults" upon the prevailing authority.⁴

Such accounts read much like recent chronicles of American country life and the struggles of the farmers. It is not now that we read of city streets that "be fallen down," or parish churches without services, of abandoned households in the towns, or generally of urban desolation, but it has been for decades of rural populations that have fallen, of country churches that have closed, of prices that have sunk to such levels that there is universal "unwin" in agriculture, of farms abandoned, of country desolation and despair. Moreover, it is of embattled farmers and rural riots that we have read, and of Holiday Associations and Protective Organizations that have risen in revolt against the domination of urban interests. Most of all, it has been of "paper wars" in Washington (like those of old in Westminster) over the grievances of the oppressed agriculturists.

However, quite unlike that of the Fifteenth Century, the outcome of the rural-urban conflict has not been to the great advantage of the revolting group. Urban culture, so much more effective in its control of the environment than the rural, securing such greater satisfaction for immensely larger numbers and exercising incomparably more certain mastery over human destiny, calmly holds its rightful sway. It does it because its culture is in fact the civilization of the modern world.

Diffusion of the Primary Urban Culture

Naturally, that culture which is the more effective, resourceful, expansive, and dynamic will spread and superimpose its patterns upon the whole of any society of which it is a part; it will overflow the relatively static areas of the feebler culture. That is what the urban culture is doing in America today. Everywhere its patterns are being diffused over the rural regions. The urbanization of rural society is a fact of common observation. What it amounts to in terms of social process is domination and exploitation of the

⁴ *Ibid.*

country by the city, together with the resulting conflict, to mention only a few of the ongoings involved.

In making these generalizations the fact cannot be ignored that some reciprocal influence between country and city exists. Even tho there is urban domination, it is not supreme. The economic culture of cities is in a measure at least determined by the nature of the region in which they are located. That is apparent in such cases as Chicago, New York, New Orleans, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Butte, San Francisco, and many other American cities. Their industries and commercial interests reflect more or less the hinterland. The surrounding country supplies the economic resources of the city.⁵ To that extent the city is dependent upon the country and is dominated by it, but it is a situational, passive domination in contrast to the positive, aggressive, culture-shaping influence of the city on the country.

A more detailed analysis of the urban complex and the diffusion of its elements will indicate what is happening. Since it is the material culture that plays a determining role, first notice will be given it. The material aspects of modern industrial society are marked by certain characteristics suggested by the terms commercialism, capitalism, mechanization, specialization, and organization. These traits are of urban genesis and traditionally have not been associated with agriculture.

1. *Commercialism*, by which is meant the practice of trading in goods or the exchange of commodities, is an essential phase of city life. Urban enterprises are virtually all commercial. That indeed is the object of production or manufacture. When exchange stops, production ceases. Trade is as necessary to the existence of the city as is the circulation of blood to an organism. Money is the medium thru which trade flows. Markets, commercial routes, transportation systems, financial institutions are other devices for facilitating commerce. When and where cities are wanting, agricultural society is untouched by commercial practices; and only where ur-

⁵ See H. W. Adam and H. E. Moore, *American Regionalism*, Henry Holt, 1938; N. S. B. Gras, "Regionalism and Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs*, 1929, pp. 459-465; W. F. Ogburn, "Regions," *Social Forces*, Oct., 1936, pp. 6-12.

banism prevails does farming pass under the system. A few generations ago, when eighty to eighty-five of every hundred Americans lived on farms, agriculture was generally non-commercial, but today, when seventy-five out of every hundred people are living in towns, it is almost wholly so. Self-sufficient farming prevailed in the pre-urban period. Production was for use, for the immediate consumption of those who lived on the soil and tilled it. Exchange was not the end in view and where it took place at all it was largely incidental. Money was little needed then and its use was negligible. It was the rise of modern industry that changed the situation. With it came an urban demand for food and raw materials. Money and manufactured commodities were offered in exchange for farm products and thus the wants of agricultural people were stimulated until production shifted to a monetary and commercial basis. So the farmer presently found himself compelled to earn his living by producing for the market. Thus the commercial pattern was thrust upon rural society and money-getting became as necessary to the soil tiller as to the urban dweller. In fact, the completeness of the farmer's dependence upon money measures the absoluteness of the commercialization to which he has been subjected.

2. *Specialization* in production is fostered by commercialism in agriculture even as in urban industry. It has grown until almost every art and craft except husbandry has been drawn from rural to urban areas. The city has acquired monopoly of the arts by perfecting and utilizing them so efficiently under the factory system that goods are made cheaper than ever they were by rural craftsmen. The cost of living is to that extent lowered, but the farmer can no longer consume the goods without money and without price as once he did when they were the products of his own hands and skill. His dependence upon the town and upon a monetary system has thus become almost absolute.

The commercial system, moreover, has fostered specialization in husbandry itself. The need for a money crop has promoted it. Our cotton, corn, wheat, fruit, dairy, truck, and other areas are partially at least a response to this necessity. The effect has been to increase the dependency of farmers.

3. *Capitalization* is another trait of urban industry that has spread to agriculture. Farming has been forced to capitalize by the necessity of cultural conformity. So it has come about that two-thirds of the wealth of the farms of the United States is in land while the other third consists of operating capital, but the tendency is marked for the proportion of the latter to increase. The rapid growth of a tenant class indicates this, for it shows the impossibility of farm operators acquiring ownership of both land and capital at the same time. Once it was easy to become a landowner, for little capital was required to run a farm. Now, however, agriculture approaches capitalistic industry, where the workers have long since ceased to own the instruments of production. Just as the extensive employment of capital in the city creates a class of property owners and one of propertyless laborers, so does the introduction of large quantities of capital into agriculture bring about similar conditions among soil tillers.

Moreover, in consequence of the system, the agriculturalists have been driven to resort to mass production not unlike that in industry. In both fields the results are much the same. They are overcapitalization, overproduction, and glutted markets. The crop yield has increased way beyond national needs or world demand. At the same time the use of much capital has made the burden of cost greater than the ordinary farmer can bear; hence the profits of husbandry have vanished. The small farmer in particular begins to face extinction in competition with large-scale farming, just as the small enterpriser went to the wall in industry. Apparently only the economies secured by mass production can secure profit either in industry or in agriculture; but without profit, bankruptcy follows. Thus urban capitalism molds the country to its pattern in another respect and ruthlessly scourges the mass of soil tillers into a serfdom of wage-earning and mere subsistence farming.

4. *Organization* is still another trait of urban culture that is passing into agriculture. Its transfer has been inevitable along with the other patterns. Farmers' organizations have grown apace since the dawn of the Twentieth Century. The coöperative movement, embracing a third of the farm operators, represents commercial

agriculture adapting itself to city methods. This movement seeks thru corporate effort to control the market and conserve profits. Its underlying motive is the same as in industry where price-fixing and monopoly are sought. Nor does the fact that agricultural coöperation has been set up as a foil and protection against urban domination in anywise alter the case. Corporate farming also has appeared. In 1930 there were 9,600 such enterprises and many more in 1940. Altho few in number among the six million and more farms, they may well become the most important type in the course of a few years, for it is quite possible that profit-seeking agriculture will have to take that form to survive. The capitalistic system may require it. Indeed, it is a question whether a city-made civilization can tolerate the prevalence of a non-corporate mode anywhere. It may well be doubted if a nation's subsistence mores can remain half corporate and half individualistic. If profit-seeking agriculture is forced to incorporate, mode-of-living farming will survive only as a subordinate form among a low standard and marginal peasantry. They will cling to the soil and eke out an existence but play no important role in producing for the market.

Meantime, however, the urban culture may undergo radical change and the capitalistic system give place to some other. If this should happen, there is no reason to think that the city will not continue, perchance with even greater assurance than now, to impose its patterns upon rural society. This it has quickly done in Soviet Russia under communism. However much the process may have been hastened by a proletarian dictatorship, it is probable that natural diffusion would in a little longer time have accomplished the same ends, for cultural consistency will tend, I suppose, to establish itself in any type of civilization. If the urban order is a capitalistic one, so will the rural be; and by the same logic, if the urban turns communistic, the rural will sooner or later follow suit.

Diffusion of the Secondary Urban Culture

From the foregoing analysis it should be clear how far the primary mores are being transferred from city to country. The secondary mores are undergoing a like diffusion. They too will

have to be considered if the full import of the social process is to be grasped.

The secondary mores of the city are being established in the country by two methods; one by the indirect tendency of all dependent variables to change with the alteration of the primary or independent culture, and the other by the direct diffusion of urban patterns of the secondary sort into rural areas.

The *community form* is a part of the secondary culture closely dependent upon the subsistence mores. As the rural economy has changed, so has the community. The neighborhood and trade center have undergone definite alteration. Wider trade zones and areas of association have appeared in response to new needs. Motor transit has greatly facilitated this but there have been still more trenchant forces at work. The capitalistic system abhors restriction and localism; it demands extension. At the same time the megalopolis has arisen to cast its shadow over an ever widening sphere. Thus much of America has come directly under metropolitan influence. The Fifteenth Census revealed ninety-three cities of 100,000 or more population each, while in them and within a radius of twenty-five miles of these centers there were found dwelling nearly half the nation's people. Within these regions of conurbation the local community has lost most of its identity by being swallowed up in the larger aggregate. Likewise in the sections far remote from the great centers there are many smaller cities exerting somewhat the same influence over the local neighborhoods about them until the mobility, fluidity, and expansiveness of the urban aggregate tend to decommunitize the country even as its own life has been deprived of local centers.

Primary grouping also is giving place to forms of secondary association under the pressure of rural capitalism and of urban example. Mention has already been made of the coöperative movement in connection with the primary mores, but it represents the secondary also insofar as it gives a different basis of association. Functional grouping is thus supplanting personal association.

A new *education* fostered by profit farming has appeared. Time was when a self-sufficient agriculture had little need of formal

education. What mattered were the handed-down techniques which were acquired under the natural apprenticeship relation of child and parent. Even the three 'R's offered by the schools were as much of an adornment as a necessity. But now the handed-down practices and wisdom scarcely suffice; it takes scientific knowledge, business training, managerial ability, and familiarity with the problem of markets to be a successful farmer. Hence education takes on new importance and receives new emphasis in the schools as well as from a variety of special agencies. Thus another phase of the derivative culture begins to conform to the basic mores.

A modified *religion* somewhat more in harmony with the new conditions is slowly emerging. The extremely emotional reactions to the natural order that once prevailed do not comport well with the profit seeking system. The result is the appearance of more rational attitudes. The wise husbandman will leave little to Providence under present conditions. He must be his own Providence if he is to succeed; hence he wastes no time praying for rain as once farmers did. Weather forecasts and treatises on growing drought-resistant crops occupy his attention instead. He does not meekly accept it as a chastisement of the Lord and do penance when his hogs get cholera; he makes inquiry as to the source of infection and hastens to have the herd vaccinated. Nor does he attribute lean years and hard times to neglect of worship, as did his forefathers, and seek remedy by increased devotions, but the chances are that he will join a farmers' organization in an appeal to Washington for relief legislation. Thus religious observance declines or, if continued, takes on a more rationalized and sublimated form.

This analysis of the secondary mores of rural society might be much extended, but perhaps enough has been said to make clear how, by the "strain toward consistency" which is operative as well as by the direct transference of urban patterns, the rural culture is becoming urbanized.

The Prospects

The ascendancy and consequent diffusion of urban culture is believed by some to carry with it its own destruction. Prophets

are pronouncing its doom and showing how it is riding for a fall. They tell us that it must be succeeded by a dominant rural culture, for that alone is germinal and full of life, whereas the urban is struck with death. The arguments pro and con on this hypothesis are too long and too philosophic for consideration here. Whether the notion is mere wishful thinking on the part of frustrated ruralists or the sound prevision of social trends cannot be determined by balancing the claims one against the other. Only time can tell. All that we can be reasonably sure of is that the more dynamic destiny-controlling culture will dominate in the future as it has done in the past.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Make lists of the dynamic factors in both urban and rural culture and compare the two in order to determine which has the better claim to dominate.
2. Even where the economic life of a city is determined by the agriculture of the region in which it is located, why is it that the country does not dominate it?

3. In what respect does what the government is now doing to the farms duplicate what private industry did to the towns a century ago?

4. Will the diffusion of the secondary mores of the city thruout the country be more or less rapid than was that of the primary mores? Give reasons for your answer.

5. What lags do you see between the two in your community?

6. Are the rural leaders and educators of your community interested in overcoming these lags or are they interested in agricultural technology to the neglect of social adjustments?

7. What, in your opinion, is beneficial and what harmful to rural life in urbanization?

8. How far has the New Deal for agriculture brought more harmonious relations between country and city? Cite specific cases.

TECHNIQUES OF RURAL CHANGE

COUNTRYMEN everywhere in the world are traditionally adverse to change. The American farmer is true to type; he is notoriously conservative. As one has said, he "can go along as he always has and as his father did before him and still keep going."¹ Howbeit, he is much less stagnant than the average Old World peasant, tho far more so than the city dwelling American. He has been resistant to innovating ways, reluctant to adopt scientific methods, and opposed to "new fangled things" in general. He has not been kindly disposed toward political and social experiments, for he votes down most reform measures having to do with improvement in education, sanitation, health, government, taxation and labor conditions. In politics he is generally a standpatter; in religion an unchanging "fundamentalist"; and in business matters an overcautious enterpriser.

The average urbanite, in contrast, is inclined to be radical. He seeks the new in business, proposes political and social improvement, and prizes whatever is "modern" and "up-to-date."

The specific causes of this difference between the cityman and the countryman are not far to seek. First of all, the environments of the two are different. One dwells in a man-made world that is never finished; the other in the world of nature, whose ways are established. The average countryman is a property-owner with his possessions at stake, whereas the average city man is a wage earner with nothing to lose but everything to gain. If a capitalist, the urbanite can more readily readjust himself if alteration comes than can the landowner and crop-grower. Above all, the people of the city are younger in years and so more pliable, are of many social

¹ Evelyn Dewey, *New Schools for Old*, p. 7.

and cultural elements, are followers of a greater variety of ways of getting a living. Hence, stimulation plays upon them, while stagnation surrounds the countryman.

Methods of Change

Altho the traditions of rural life do not favor change, the country is by no means changeless. On the contrary, American rural society is fairly progressive compared with rural society in other parts of the world. The American farmer is probably less bound by habit, less wedded to the old, less opposed to social reform than is the farming class of any other country with the exception of Denmark. The methods of effecting change in rural society are so vital that they must be carefully analyzed.

1. *The persuasive method.* This is the one most in vogue in all effort toward reform in country and city alike. It proceeds upon the assumption that the communication of ideas will lead to their performance. Back of this assumption lies a more fundamental one, which holds that people are rationally motivated. Hence the widespread resort to preaching and to the appeal of ideas. But this method has been greatly overrated and overworked. Judged by results, it is of doubtful value. For men in general are not primarily rational. Their essential conservatism argues as much, for the rational are normally radical. James Harvey Robinson attempts to show that only one-fourth part of the human mind is predisposed to change. The civilized man's consciousness rests back on the animal consciousness, the child consciousness, and the savage consciousness. The animal mind, with its instincts, its curiosity and impulse to fumble and grope; the child mind, with its prejudices and misapprehensions and struggles against the censorship of elders; the savage mind, which was man's till the last 5,000 years, with its anthromorphic and conservative ways, are all three still playing a part in the civilized mind, which is critical, speculative, skeptical, and originative. The three former minds that we possess, or that most men do, generally dominate the fourth, or civilized mind. For this reason, most all the world is very conservative. It conforms,

it changeth not, it does not venture, but returns under the pull of instincts to its old and customary ways where it is sure.

The countryman, living in a *milieu* that does not stimulate the civilized part of the mind overmuch, answers less, if anything, to the rational appeal than does the average city person. The reformer's message falls mostly upon deaf ears. Only the few are able to harken and to take heed.

This basic condition is often modified, however, by factors favorable to the rational appeal. If there be many youth, the persuasive method will meet with much more success than otherwise; for youth responds to ideas as age does not. If, again, the people be largely pioneers, there will be a similar response; for the pioneer also is a man of change, else he would not have pioneered. He is receptive to ideals and acts upon them as few others do. Thus, the frontier of America has ever been the home of our most vigorous political and social idealism. The West and the Northwest are its chief abiding places today. There the farmer has been persuaded by reform programs, by the tenets of democracy, by the coöperative movement, and by the gospel of progress. Upon these pioneering and youthful peoples the persuasion that has left other rural sections largely cold, unmoved, and barren has fallen as seed to spring up in abundant fruitage. The Granger movement, Greenbackism, Populism, Free Silver, the Nonpartisan League, and the La Follette movement are the major causes in which response has been manifested. Still again, the persuasive method is more effective when applied to the primary mores than to the secondary. Rational variation may be secured in the things that have to do with getting a living when people cannot be moved with reference to those of less vital import. Says Keller: "It is not hard to demonstrate to an ignorant person in this country that he should learn to read and write; he can see that by living in this society. Similarly for his interest is it that he shall use the English language. Tests lie all about him and are immediate and decisive. But try to persuade him by abstract argument to give up the vendetta, to renounce anarchistic leanings, or to change his religion and you fail. There are no immediate and decisive tests at hand. You cannot demonstrate

that interest will be subverted by change; you cannot even secure visualization of evil consequences. . . . The more nearly custom (the folkways) represents direct reaction on environment in the actual struggle for material aids to existence, the more rational a test does it undergo, and conversely, the more derived the societal forms, the more clearly do they fall under the tests of tradition rather than reason." ²

"You can persuade a savage of the inadequacy of his stone hatchet long before he can be made to see that his family system is capable of being superseded by one yielding better satisfaction to his interests." ³ The American farmer has been somewhat influenced by the sort of ideas that would show how two ears of corn might be made to grow where one grew before but in most other things he has remained essentially unmoved.

Not only does the persuasive method often miss the mark, but, what is worse, it may accomplish harm. It may agitate only the emotions and educate not at all. Says Sumner of agitation: "Every impulse given to the masses is, in its nature, spasmodic and transitory. No systematic enterprise to enlighten the masses can be carried out. Campaigns of education contain a fallacy. Education takes time. It cannot be treated as subsidiary for a lifetime and then be made the chief business for six months with the desired results. A campaign of education is undemocratic. It implies that some one is teacher and somebody else pupil. It can only result in the elucidation of popular interests and the firmer establishment of popular prejudice. On the other hand, an agitation which appeals skillfully to pet notions and to latent fanaticism may stampede the masses. The Middle Ages furnished a number of cases. The Mahdis, who have arisen in Mohammedan Africa, and other Moslem prophets have produced wonderful phenomena of this kind. The silver agitation was begun in 1878 by a systematic effort of three or four newspapers in the Middle West addressed to currency notions which the Greenback proposition had popularized. What is the

² A. G. Keller, *Societal Evolution*, p. 132. Copyright by The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1915. Used by permission.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

limit to the possibilities of fanaticism and frenzy which might be produced in any society by agitation skillfully addressed to the fallacies and passions of the masses? The answer lies in the mores, which determine the degree of reserved common sense, and the habit of observing measures and methods, to which the masses have been accustomed. It follows that popular agitation is a desperate and doubtful method. The masses, as the great popular jury which, at last, by adoption or rejection, decides the fate of all proposed changes in the mores, need stability and moderation. Popular agitation introduces into the masses initiative and creative functions which destroy its judgment and call for quite other qualities.”⁴

2. *The demonstration method.* Where preaching and efforts of persuasion have failed to get results, another method has been resorted to with singular success. The method is that of visual demonstration. It is estimated that about one in seven adults can reason from principle to practice or can be influenced by lectures, reports and bulletins. But four out of five adults will learn new practices only by seeing them performed. Thus with about 86 per cent of the people amenable to change chiefly by this method, it becomes of first-rate importance.⁵ It has been extensively applied, particularly in the alteration of the subsistence mores. Results obtained by it have been nothing short of revolutionary.

This method is distinctly an American invention in its application to rural life. It grew out of the efforts of the agricultural experiment stations to get farmers to adopt the results of scientific experimentation. Bulletins and institute lectures were without much effect until someone observed that experiments conducted on farms were imitated by the farmers of the neighborhood. Hence, by means of these coöperative projects, in which the stations and actual farmers took part, the value of the demonstrative method became apparent.

This method was given large vogue thru the efforts of Doctor Seaman A. Knapp, an agent of the Department of Agriculture in

⁴ From Sumner's *Folkways*, pp. 51-52. Copyright by Ginn and Co.

⁵ C. B. Smith, "Principles and Achievements in Adult Education Under the Smith-Lever Act," *Proceedings Fifth National Country Life Conference*, 1922, p. 71.

the South. He began to employ it in Texas and Louisiana in an effort to curb the ravages of the boll-weevil. From that small beginning a nation-wide movement and organization built upon the idea gave the coöperative agricultural extension work, carried on jointly by federal and state governments. The County Agricultural Agent, the Home Demonstration Agent and the Boys' and Girls' Club work are its main products and lines of endeavor. The County Agent is engaged in some 3,075 counties, conducting and supervising farm demonstrations covering practically every phase of the business of farming.

The Home Demonstration agents are at work in three-fifths of the counties. They are engaged in showing farm women and girls better ways of home making. The Boys' and Girls' Club work is giving vocational training and cultural education by the same general methods to the youth of the country. It centers attention not only on some important phase of agriculture or home life in each community, but it seeks also to develop social qualities, leadership, and the general personality of country youth. In 1938 one-fifth of the farm boys and girls 10 to 20 years of age were being instructed.

This demonstration method has been found quite as effective when applied in spheres other than that of agriculture or home making. In matters of health and sanitation it has proved exceedingly valuable.

3. *The morphological method.* By this is meant the effort to produce change in social habits by altering the social structure, i. e., by means of organization. Rural reformers have generally assumed that they could do it in this way. Hence, excellent schemes have been drawn up and comprehensive social machinery devised for carrying them into effect. Not infrequently such machinery is actually set up in a community in the hope that it will run. Sometimes it does run, but in the vast majority of cases it does not run for long and proves to be so much motionless enginery, impotent to accomplish any work. Thus, when an attempt is made in this way to mobilize a rural community to some new ends and for some

new endeavor, all that usually comes of the undertaking is the lifeless machinery itself. The life cycle of rural organizations is definite and short. *Stimulation*, usually by some agency from outside the local community, is given in behalf of a specific interest. The *organization* is formed by electing officers, enrolling members, adopting a constitution, and outlining a program of action. The newly formed association attempts to *carry on* by itself and without the support of the original promoters. It meets with *difficulties* in fulfilling its aims, which probably prove to be beyond reach. Factions develop, indifference creeps in, conflicts with other local interests and institutions arise, and the organization *declines* and dies.⁶

Unless the spirit of community is present, i. e., a self-conscious unity of people who feel a need for joint action, no program of organization is likely to succeed. Only in exceptional cases will the movement for organization itself give rise to this spirit of community. Where it does so, the method of course justifies itself. Where it does not and where there was no real community to begin with, it proves futile.

4. *Deterministic change.* The most profound and far-reaching change in society takes place of itself—mechanically. It springs from several sources. One source is the vicissitudes of nature, such as floods, droughts, storms, plagues, pests, and the extremes of climatic cycles. The periodic recurrence of drought in the swing of the climatic cycle over sections of the West has been responsible for the migration of rural people in and out of that region. It has influenced political and economic movements also. Again, the ravages of the boll-weevil in the South have caused numerous readjustments in the afflicted areas and resulted in extensive population shiftings.

Another source is more directly social, such as crises, war, revolutionizing invention, and significant discovery. These set going chains of consequences which effect permanent alteration. The in-

⁶ See Kolb and Wileden, "Special Interest Groups," University of Wisconsin Agr. Exp. Station, *Research Bulletin No. 84*, 1927; "Making Rural Organizations Effective," University of Wisconsin, Agr. Exp. Station *Bulletin No. 403*, Oct., 1928.

vention of the cotton gin, reaping machinery, the tractor and the automobile are instances in point. Rural institutions and the habits of farmers are being changed by these devices.

A third source of alteration is found in the incidental consequences of purposive action. Much that happens is unlooked for, unplanned, and fortuitous. It transpires as the by-product of conscious endeavor. Often it turns out to be the main product instead of the one that was sought. The Farm Bureau movement, for example, was designed by the government for educational purposes. Once started, however, in parts of the country it became a powerful economic agency engaged in business coöperation. It has also developed political tendencies and rallied the farmers of the nation to bring pressure upon Congress to get desirable legislation. It was largely responsible for the Farm Bloc in the Sixty-seventh and Sixty-eighth Congresses.

Unintended changes come about in still another way. When the subsistence mores undergo transformation, as Keller has shown, the secondary mores tend to alter in conformity with them, i. e., the secondary will "consist" with the primary. This is illustrated with respect to the church. When the self-sufficient agricultural economy prevailed and farm stuff was produced for home consumption instead of for market, money was scarce and little used by the American farmer. The church was built and the minister sustained by contributions of work and produce. Religion was supported on donations. But with the development of commercial farming and the sale of produce for money, the business of agriculture shifted to a new basis. In keeping, the attitude toward the church has undergone a general change. The church support has become monetary and the obligation to render personal service in its behalf has given place to the practice of hiring things done for it.

5. *The contact method.* It is generally recognized that one of the most effective means of social change is found in contact of cultures—where peoples of different cultures come in touch with one another, cross-fertilization takes place. Perhaps nothing has been more conducive to progress.

In a certain sense this factor is operative with reference to rural

society. City culture and rural culture have for most of our history been spheres apart. The farmer has lived in a stagnant world remote from the dynamic centers of urban life. He has been relatively unstimulated and uninfluenced by them. Not that urban and rural culture have not always had a good deal in common in this country, but that what they have not had in common had failed to run up against its opposite in fruitful contact. But of late unparalleled agencies of communication and frequent contact have brought city and country together as never before. The result is, that wherever this has happened, country life has been greatly stimulated. Rapid urbanization has taken place.

One important consequence of contact between city and country is seen in the rise of coöperation. Individualism has been undermined by the knowledge of urban coöperation. It has begun to give way because it is unprofitable. Professor J. M. Williams has said: "The coöperative attitude which promises to transform rural life developed in other vocations before farming. Rural leaders saw business men organizing to raise prices and increase their profits; saw workmen organizing to raise their wages. They used these arguments with the rank and file of still individualistic farmers."⁷

The city class has been looked up to as superior, and its ways have been imitated. In matters of dress, recreation, moral code, and standard of living this is much in evidence.

6. *The compulsory method.* This is the method of law and government. It is also the method of social pressure where there is no legal sanction or governmental backing. Some change is wrought this way. A positive and aggressive faction may coerce the rest into altering their ways. The Empress Dowager of China issued an edict ending the opium trade. The European dictators have forced the collectivization of agriculture, altered the system of land holding, and compelled the acceptance of numerous other changes. During the Great War social pressure compelled people to support war charities, join organizations, buy bonds, and restrict food consumption. To rural America along with the rest, coercive measures were applied. Among other things, production

⁷ J. M. Williams, *Our Rural Heritage*, Alfred A. Knopf, 1925, p. 236.

was made compulsory, prices were fixed, the disposal of foodstuffs prescribed and the time of labor regulated by law. Of late the A.A.A., the Soil Conservation Acts and the Farm Security Administration have contained elements of compulsion. The last is exerting much pressure on educational agencies to support its program. Thus old habits and beliefs are being broken down and new ways established in the country.

So long as authority stands guard, its bidding is done, but when it relaxes its vigilance or goes off duty people tend to slip back into their old ways. The farmer turned his back upon social service organizations such as the Red Cross, his openhandedness ceased, and he went on a strike against the daylight saving laws after the World War. Very little, if any, permanent change was effected by the war-time compulsion.

Nevertheless some enduring change may be brought about by this method, altho force must be long applied to get permanent results. Perhaps more is accomplished when its objects are negative instead of positive. It works better as a restrictive than as a constructive agency. Otherwise governments might easily bring about all sorts of changes. But as it is, they can do but few things with any degree of success under a democratic system.

7. *The genetic method.* This method begins with the simplest elements of human nature and social behavior, i. e., reflexes, habits and customs, and out of them proceeds to develop new and more complex habits and associational modes.

Where all other methods fail, this one can be relied upon to get results if any persuasive method can. In proceeding to manipulate, the principle of preferential motives may be brought to bear. This principle indicates that men naturally act on a scale of behavior which runs from the basis of least cost and most satisfaction in effort to ever increasing cost and more enduring, if not greater, satisfactions.

I have elsewhere formulated this principle as the *Law of Rural Socialization*. This law is expressed as follows: "Coöperation in rural neighborhoods has its genesis in and development thru those forms of association which, beginning on the basis of least cost,

gradually rise thru planes of increasing cost to the stage of greatest cost in effort demanded, and which give at the same time ever increasing and more enduring benefits and satisfaction to the group.”⁸

This law of conduct is of particular significance in relation to rural change. By following it the individualistic, non-coöperating country folk may be socialized and organized. Latent gregariousness can be aroused and the play impulse utilized to get simple united action; under the stimulus of such action the work incentive can be brought forward and made to yield effective coöperation. And out of the socialized capital thus accumulated, the more difficult economic and cultural enterprises that have to do with community welfare may at length be ventured upon and realized.

Many instances could be cited where communities have been transformed substantially by this method. The achievement of Mrs. Harvey in the Porter school district of Missouri is a case in point. Evelyn Dewey's report gives us the facts somewhat as follows:⁹ Mrs. Harvey did not come to Porter with any specific and obvious program for effecting reforms in either ways of living or agricultural methods. Nor did she set about at once to impose ready-made organizations upon the community. Such tactics could only have aroused resentment and defeated her ends. Instead, she simply gave the families—hitherto isolated and self-centered on their farms—opportunities of becoming acquainted; became herself their personal friend and trusted advisor, and as such suggested the possibilities in their environment and broadened their social outlook. Thus little by little she trained them into social activity, not by obviously making over the community, but by merely “loosening forces that resulted in organization and movements.”

8. *The educational method.* In several of the methods already mentioned the educational factor is present; but what we have in mind here is education thru the schools. Formal education ought to be the most effective means of social change. Thru the schools as molders of childhood, new and better ways ought to be achieved by each succeeding generation. If they are not to any great degree,

⁸ N. L. Sims, *The Rural Community*, pp. 640-641.

⁹ Evelyn Dewey, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117.

the fault lies in what the schools teach. Confessedly they are concerned chiefly with teaching the culture of the past rather than with finding out any new things. The past tends to be idealized and the present to be perpetuated by the schools.

The rural schools are least of any the mediators of change. Such influence as they have exerted in this direction has been preponderantly adverse to rural society. It has tended to turn the footsteps of youth cityward. It has thus acted as a disturbing agency indeed, but not primarily for the advantage of the school community. Rightly directed, however, the rural school may be the most effective and dependable agency of regular and systematic change. It is at the bottom of the problem of a more adequate civilization for the country, for with the childhood and youth of today rests the trend of civilization tomorrow.

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Topics for Discussion

1. Whence comes more rural change, from voluntary efforts to alter conditions or from unplanned and unforeseen developments such as the introduction of a new mechanism, the loss of markets, a calamity, etc.?
2. What new lines of change would you like to see promoted by the demonstration methods?
3. Which is easier to introduce, a new method of crop production or a new type of organization? Why?
4. Which of the methods of change mentioned in the chapter are more

effective in the city than in the rural community? On what grounds are your conclusions based?

5. How far have programs looking to the improvement of your community followed the first principle of the *Law of Socialization*?

6. By means of what specific projects would you attempt to promote community organization in an unorganized rural community?

7. What kinds of organization have the fewest difficulties in your community? Why?

8. Evaluate the respective merits of the following methods of introducing a new practice into your community: (1) Induce a single influential family to adopt it; (2) Seek to get the whole community to adopt it all at once.

9. What change is resulting from the action of New Deal government programs in your community?

10. Debate the question: Resolved that in the long-run organized self-help will be more effective for the solution of the farmers' problems than governmental intervention.

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